



Sci-Fi Fashion ART SCHOOL



*How to Draw Science Fiction
Characters, Styles and Action Scenes*

**IRENE FLORES
AND ASHLY RAITI**

Contents

1. [Cover](#)
2. [Title Page](#)
3. [Table of Contents](#)
4. [Dedication](#)
5. [1 The Basics: Tools & Techniques](#)
 1. [Tools](#)
 2. [Faces](#)
 3. [Hands](#)
 4. [Feet](#)
 5. [Bodies](#)
 6. [Fabric](#)
 7. [Creating a Color Palette](#)
 8. [Demonstration: Adding Color](#)
6. [2 The Wasteland](#)
 1. [Hair](#)
 2. [Demonstration: Drawing Braids](#)
 3. [Clothes](#)
 4. [Accessories](#)
 5. [Desert Dwellers](#)
 6. [Demonstration: The Scavenger](#)
 7. [Demonstration: The Warrior](#)
 8. [City Dwellers](#)

9. [Demonstration: The Bartender](#)
10. [Demonstration: Setting the Scene](#)
7. [3 Urban Dystopia](#)
 1. [Hair](#)
 2. [Trendsetters](#)
 3. [Demonstration: Transparent Fabric](#)
 4. [Shapely Figures](#)
 5. [Light It Up](#)
 6. [Demonstration: The Host](#)
 7. [The Upper Crust](#)
 8. [The Ruling Class](#)
 9. [Around the World](#)
 10. [Demonstration: The Scientist](#)
 11. [Enforcers](#)
 12. [Servants](#)
 13. [The Rebellion Underground](#)
 14. [Demonstration: The Rebel Leader](#)
 15. [Dirty Jobs](#)
 16. [Looking to the Past](#)
 17. [Demonstration: The Con Man](#)
 18. [Demonstration: ...](#)

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***IRENE FLORES
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IMPACT
CINCINNATI, OHIO

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CONTENTS

1 The Basics: Tools & Techniques

Tools

Faces

Hands

Feet

Bodies

Fabric

Creating a Color Palette

DEMONSTRATION: Adding Color

2 The Wasteland

Hair

DEMONSTRATION: Drawing Braids

Clothes

Accessories

Desert Dwellers

DEMONSTRATION: The Scavenger

DEMONSTRATION: The Warrior

City Dwellers

DEMONSTRATION: The Bartender

DEMONSTRATION: Setting the Scene

3 *Urban Dystopia*

Hair

Trendsetters

DEMONSTRATION: Transparent Fabric

Shapely Figures

Light It Up

DEMONSTRATION: The Host

The Upper Crust

The Ruling Class

Around the World

DEMONSTRATION: The Scientist

Enforcers

Servants

The Rebellion Underground

DEMONSTRATION: The Rebel Leader

Dirty Jobs

Looking to the Past

DEMONSTRATION: The Con Man

DEMONSTRATION: The Reporter

4 *iRobot*

Exosuits

DEMONSTRATION: Designing ...

Dedications

Irene: This book is dedicated to Ashly, because it wouldn't exist without her. It's also dedicated to my family and friends, who didn't see me for five months while I turned into a nocturnal hermit working on a book deadline. And to twenty-four-hour donut shops—you are the true heroes of the freelance illustrator.

Ashly: This book is dedicated to Irene, whose talent, determination and crazy all-nighters brought it all together. It's also dedicated to my family, my friends and a large number of very fluffy birds. You know who you are.

1 The Basics: Tools & Techniques

Every artist is different. As you practice your skills, learn more about techniques and develop your own unique art style, experiment with different tools and figure out what works best for you. However, no matter what you draw or which art supplies you use, a good understanding of the basics will help you get to where you want to be.



Tools

Don't get overwhelmed by the huge variety of art supplies available out there. All you really need to start drawing are paper and a pen. It's OK to experiment with different supplies to find out what you prefer and what you can afford—but if you're looking for suggestions, here are a few basic tools you'll want to have on hand.



MECHANICAL PENCILS

Mechanical pencils always keep a fine point. Plus, you don't have to bother with sharpening them.



BLUE LEAD

Using blue pencil lead makes it easier to go over sketches with dark graphite or ink. Blue lead also tends to disappear when it's scanned, leaving only the darker

ink behind. No need to erase all your pencil lines manually; as soon as you scan it, your art is ready for you to add digital colors!



BEFORE AND AFTER

The image on the left shows the blue-lead sketch with the inks on top. On the right, the same image has been scanned with the grayscale setting. The blue sketch lines disappear, leaving the picture ready to color with no extra cleanup.



PAPER

You don't need expensive paper to draw—but depending on the pens you like, some kinds of paper will work better than others. Experiment to see what provides the best result with the tools you prefer. Deleter's Plain B paper works particularly well with brush pens because they don't bleed very much and the ink dries fast.



GEL AND FELT-TIP PENS

Use gel and felt-tip pens for straight lines and to fill in large areas. Trying to make lines with a brush pen and ruler can get pretty messy.



BRUSH PENS

These pens have a brush tip made of separate bristles, like a paintbrush. Brush pens can create lines of varying width, depending on how much pressure you apply while inking.

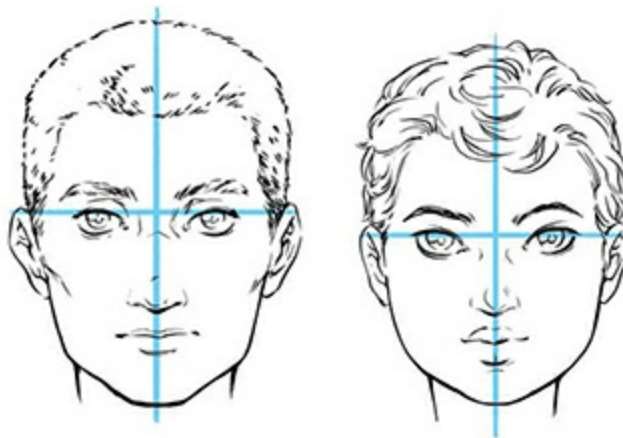


DIGITAL TOOLS

Take reference shots with your phone, use a drawing tablet and sketch digitally, or employ an art program to color your work. Just like traditional media such as pens and paints, digital tools are there to help you create!

Faces

A face can say so much about a character, all without a scrap of dialogue. Every person is different—from their bone structure to their blemishes to the shape of their nose. As an artist, you'll want to create characters with distinct faces that are recognizable at a glance, even in a close-up. To get to that point, though, it pays to practice the basics. At the simplest level, faces are symmetrical. Familiarize yourself with how to sketch them with symmetry guidelines and practice keeping everything in proportion.

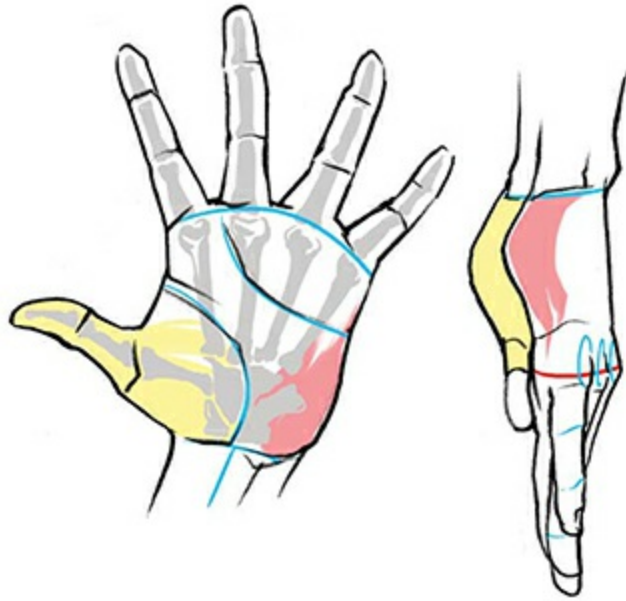


MALE VS. FEMALE FACES

There are no hard-and-fast rules about what makes a face male or female. In general, though, men's faces ...

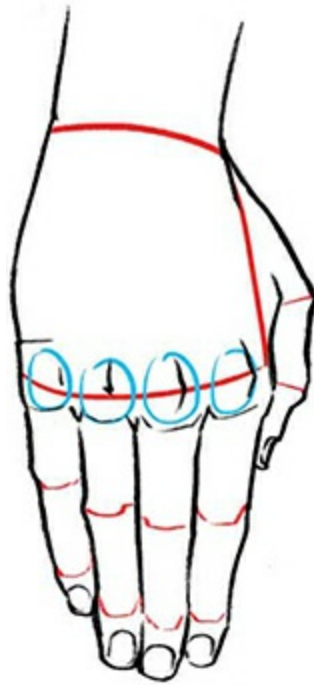
Hands

Hands are tough to draw because they're capable of doing so many things. They can hold a pencil, clap for a performance, play an instrument or swing a baseball bat. If you need help drawing a particular activity, get someone to pose while their hands perform the action you want for your character. Take reference pictures of their hands, then practice drawing from the references later.



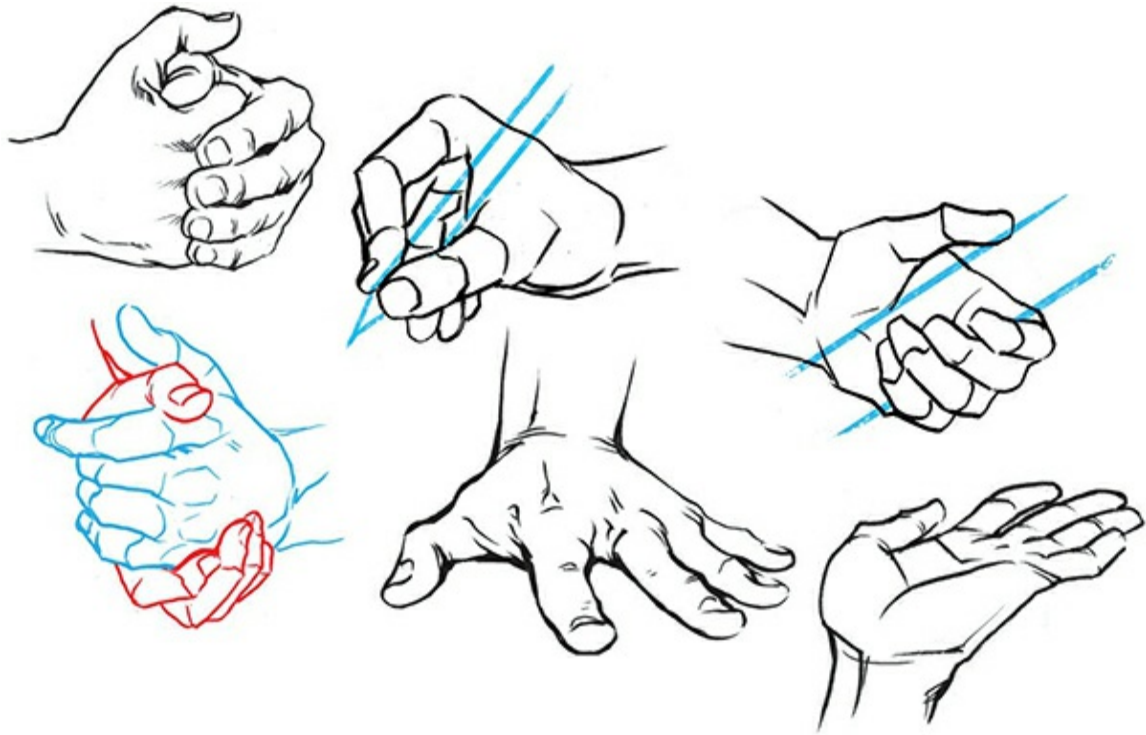
MUSCULATURE

Understanding what's going on beneath the skin can help when you're trying to draw hands. The yellow and pink sections highlight the two main muscle groups. Look closely; the palm isn't flat, but naturally curves.



BENDS AND CURVES

On the back of the hand, the knuckles arc in a slight curve. The red lines show where the fingers bend and illustrate how they follow the curve of the knuckles.

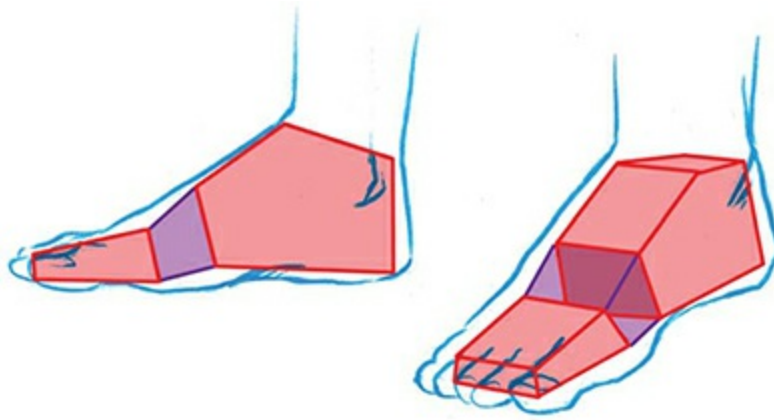


HANDS IN ACTION

Draw hands performing any gesture you can imagine. It will help you become familiar with how they work and move. You can even use one hand to draw and the other hand as a model. Practice, practice, practice!

Feet

Feet may offer a more limited range of movement than hands, but they still take a lot of practice. Like hands, feet are capable of performing a huge range of activities like jumping, dancing, running and swimming. To draw them well in action, make sure you understand the basic shape of the foot and how it comes together.



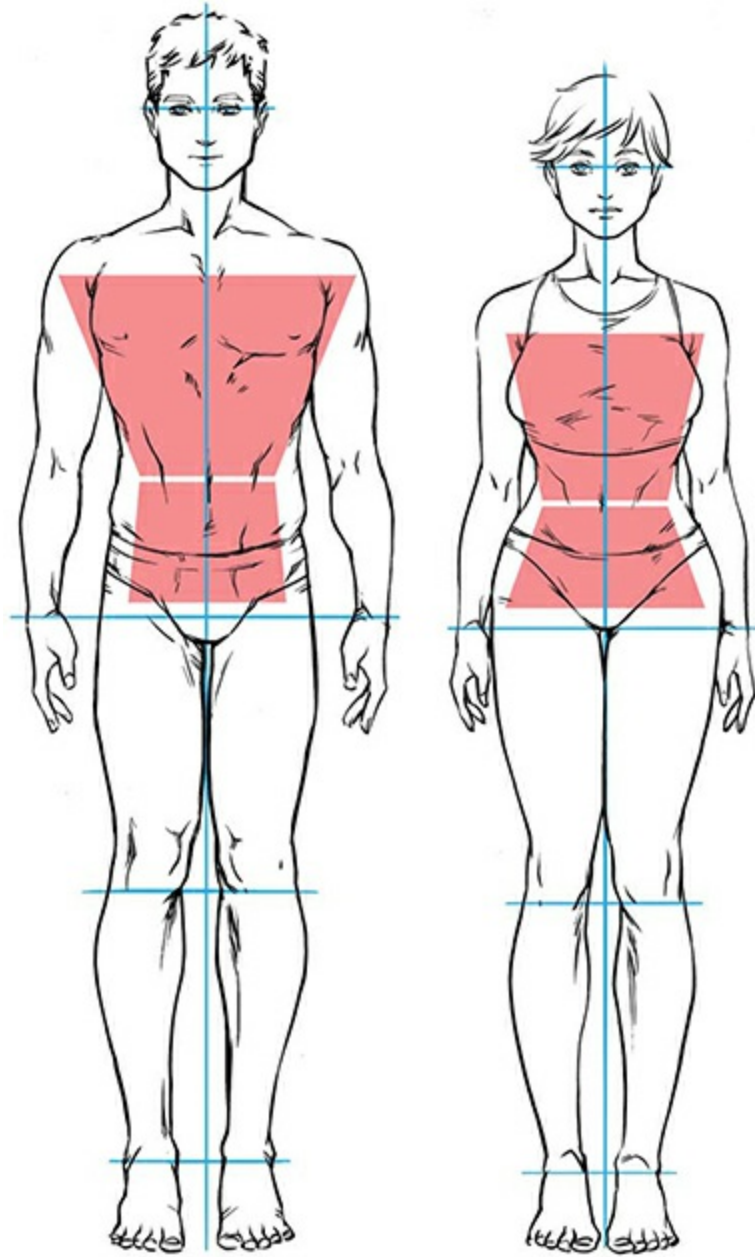


SHAPE AND MOVEMENT

Think of the foot as three different shapes joined together. The moving parts of the foot are the ankle, the toes and the center portion (outlined in purple). The heel and front pad are immobile blocks connected ...

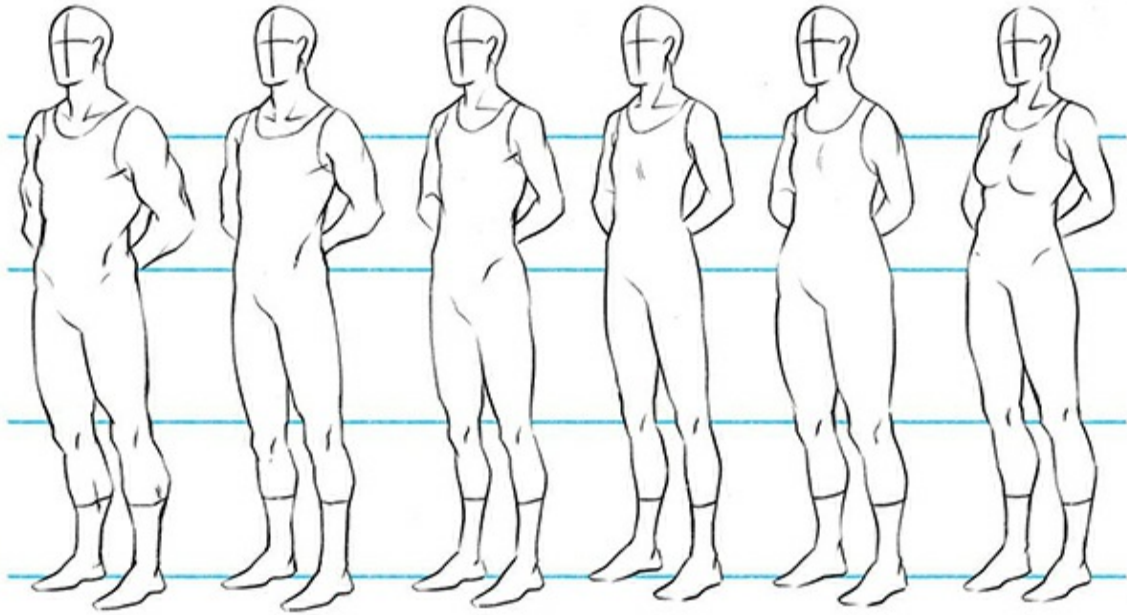
Bodies

The best tool for drawing people is a good understanding of how the body works. This section should give you a start, but you can supplement your knowledge with anatomy books, observing from life or movies, and taking figure drawing classes. For more tips on how to draw the human form, check out my books *Shojo Fashion Manga Art School* and *Shojo Fashion Manga Art School: Boys*.



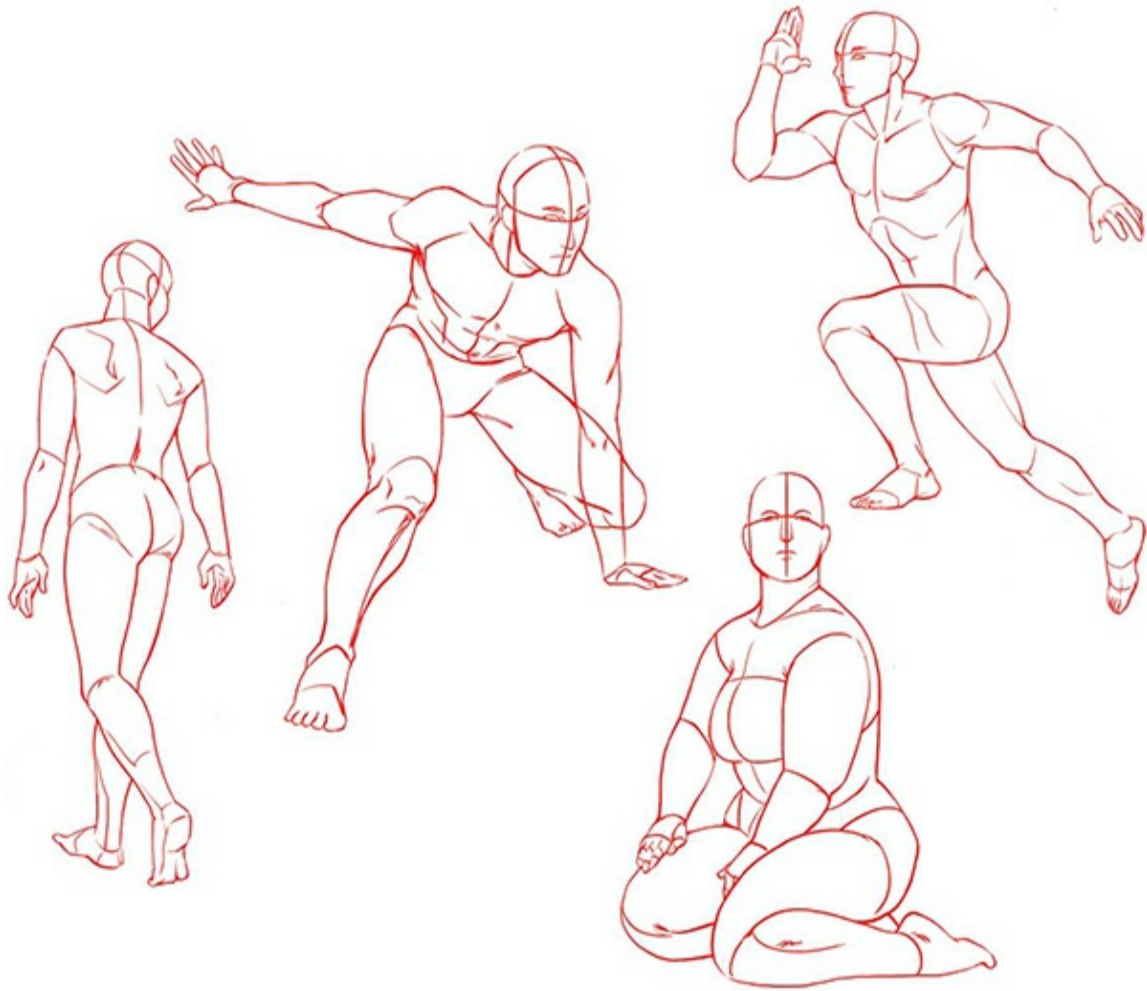
MALE-FEMALE COMPARISON

In general, men have wider shoulders and narrower hips. Women have shorter torsos, wider hips and shoulders that slope downward. These aren't set-in-stone rules, though. Think of them as general guidelines, because bodies come in all shapes and sizes.



BODY TYPES

Not everyone has a perfectly “manly” or “womanly” body. Body types run the whole spectrum, and a lot of them fall in between. Much like different facial features, people can have wide or narrow hips, flat or full chests and long or stocky legs. They can be short, tall, fat or thin.



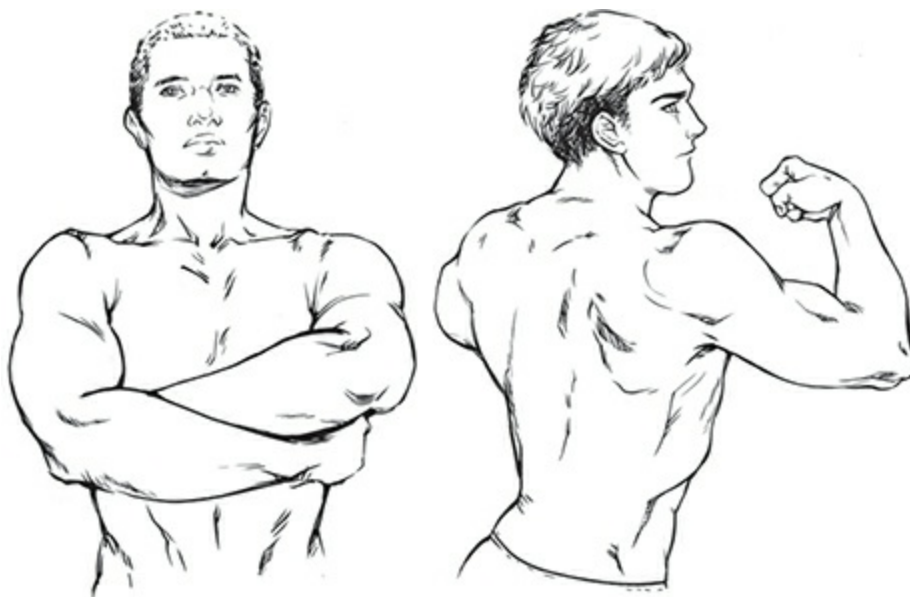
WHEN IN DOUBT TRY IT OUT

Draw various body types in all sorts of poses, from sitting to walking casually to leaping. Using symmetry guidelines will help keep everything in place. For extra practice, try drawing the same pose from different angles.



RELAXED MUSCLES

After sketching the body's guidelines, add detail. That doesn't necessarily mean a lot of muscles, though. For an average body type, this relaxed pose doesn't have a lot of muscle definition.



MUSCLES IN MOTION

When the body flexes, its muscles contract. Show definition by shading or adding small lines in the places that are more visible due to the light and shadow cast on the skin.



SHOW THEM, DON'T SHOW THEM OFF

You don't have to pose and flex to show muscle definition. Physical activities automatically put the muscles being used on display.

Fabric

You've got your pose. Now you're ready to start clothing your characters. Here are a few handy reminders to help you get started.



NATURAL VS. UNNATURAL FIT

Fabric doesn't naturally gather under or between breasts. If a woman is wearing a snug-fitting top, the fabric pulls down, not under.



FABRIC MOVEMENT

The type of fabric affects a garment's shape, but that's not all that changes it. When you're clothing your characters, consider outside forces such as the body's movement or strong wind and weather.

DRAPING FABRIC

All fabric is not created ...

Creating a Color Palette

A color palette is the range of colors used in visual art. Choosing a palette before you start coloring helps hold the narrative together by making your characters and places look like they all share the same tones, shadows and lighting.



PRACTICE BY USING PHOTOS

If you look closely at this desert image, you'll see that it isn't just brown. It has shades of orange, tan and chocolate. The shadows are a very dark purple, and the sky is bright blue.



CHOOSE YOUR MAIN COLORS

Choose a few main colors from your reference photo to create a color palette. Try to include a light color, midtones and a darker shadow tone.

Now you can work from this palette to color your own desert setting and the characters within it.



LIMITED PALETTE

The white snow in this scene isn't just white. There are different shades of blue and gray. Note that even though the trees are green, their shadows have a blue-gray cast to them.



SNOW AND SKY PALETTE

Here, the palette is based on only the snow and sky. It focuses on a variety of cooler hues so you can use it to create a winter landscape.

DEMONSTRATION ***ADDING COLOR***

So you have a beautiful, finished piece of line art. Maybe you're done—or maybe you want to take it a step further and add some personality with color. Whether you choose to color digitally or work with traditional media, the same principles apply. Use whatever you feel most comfortable with.



1 PREP YOUR LINE ART

Get your inks finished and ready for color. Some spots will have thicker lines and black areas to add depth. Or, if you'd rather, you can use thinner ink lines and add shadows when you color. It all depends on your drawing style and how you approach your line art.

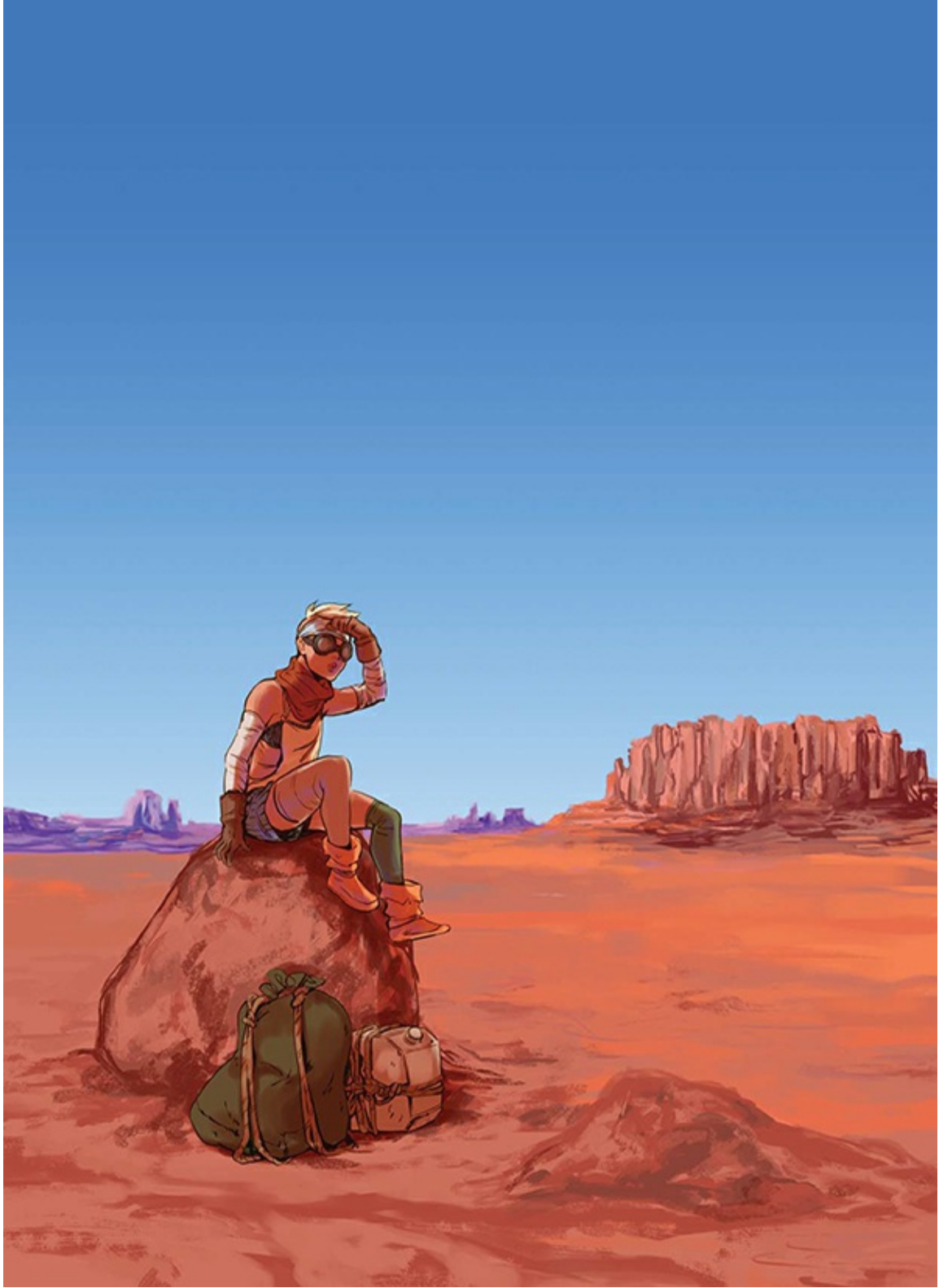
2 SELECT A COLOR PALETTE

You can base a character's ...

2

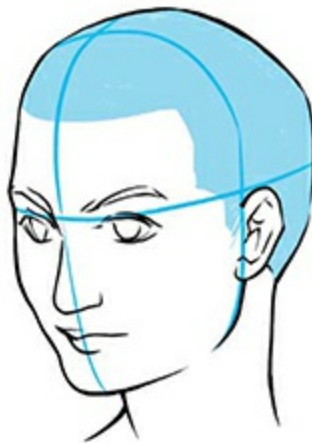
The Wasteland

Once, this world was Earth as we know it today. Then along came some disaster of monumental proportions and swept all that aside. Now the wasteland is all that's left. Clean food and water is scarce. Life is hard, and inhabitants learn how to live under their own power—or die. Every now and then, glimpses of a happier past are visible buried in the post-apocalyptic scenery, but that's all they are—memories.



Hair

In a post-apocalyptic setting, nothing is clean or pristine. Hairstyles tend toward the short, scruffy and utilitarian. While you're designing your characters, ask yourself whether they have access to water for grooming, or even a comb. Do they care how their hair looks? Do they spend time to make it presentable?



HAIRLINES

To get started, draw the head and then determine the hairline. Placement varies; you can set it lower or higher on the forehead. For older characters, you can set it even farther back to give them a receding hairline.



DEMONSTRATION

DRAWING BRAIDS

Braids are a realistic and plausible way to style a character's hair in a low-maintenance setting. They don't take long to accomplish, keep the hair out of a character's face and hold up well if subjected to rigorous physical activity.



1 START SIMPLE

Start with two simple horizontal lines. Within that column, create two slanted lines that form a slight V, with one of the slants extending lower.



2 REPEAT THE V SHAPE

Repeat the V shape to create a herringbone pattern.



3 ROUND THE EDGES

Take the edges in and round them. The result will look like coiled rope with the sides pressing inward.



4 ADD DETAIL AND CREATE TEXTURE

Add detail by drawing some strands in the braid to create texture.

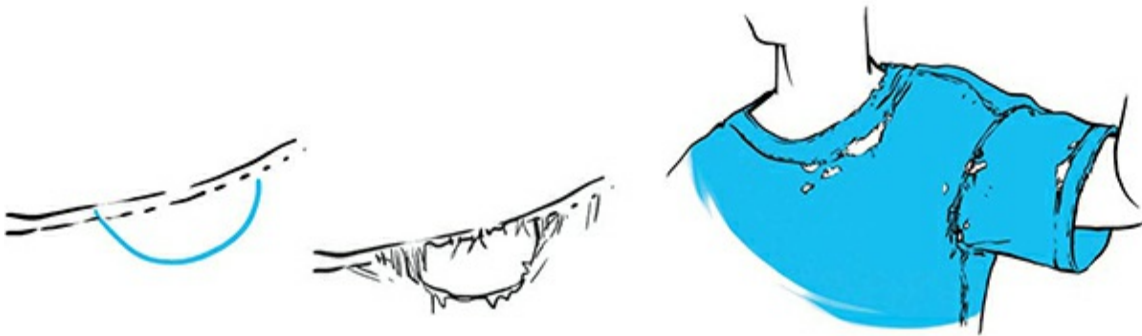


CONTRASTING TEXTURE

Sometimes, it's appropriate to use two different textures for the hair of a single character. Here, the beard is comprised of very tight curls, but on the head those curls have been pulled into dreadlocks.

Clothes

There is no excess here in the wasteland. Every scrap is treasured and used, and clothes are worn until they fall apart. Learning how to draw fabric that's torn and frayed will help set the scene.



COMING APART AT THE SEAMS

Garments are joined together with seams. As clothes start to wear out, the seams are usually the first areas to go.

Use a curve placed against the seam to show where the fabric will start separating. Then add frayed edges to the torn thread and uneven fabric to the bottom part of the curve. At the corners, where the rip is still attached to the seam, the thread will be visibly stretched out and attempting to hold the ...

Accessories

In a post-apocalyptic wasteland, accessories have a lot less to do with whether a purse matches a dress and a lot more to do with what can be cobbled together. Keep in mind what's available while you're outfitting your characters, and have fun playing with unexpected scraps from the world we currently know.

Weapons

With no remaining means to manufacture weapons, wasteland dwellers can't rely on anything fresh or new. When the going gets tough, they get creative. Anything that does damage has the potential to be a weapon, and separate objects can be combined with wire, cloth and leather to make them more effective.



WRENCH

Why mess with perfection? This wrench works just fine as is. It's large, blunt and heavy.



AXE

This axe is a round buzz saw blade strapped to a piece of wood.



KNIFE

A knife can be as simple as a shard of metal with a wrapped wire handle.



MACE

The large nuts and bolts at the head of this mace give it more clout.



PIPE HAMMER

Intersecting segments of pipe make a formidable hammer.



Jewelry

Even in the wasteland, where survival is a daily concern, certain types of characters will want items created for the sake of decoration. But here, too, the standards have changed. After all, who can make perfectly cut precious gemstones without the proper tools? Instead, experiment with other objects: bottle caps, bobbins, buttons and bits of chain. For something shiny and eye-catching, opt for scraps of technology like flash drives or broken watch faces.

Look Wasted

While you're designing your objects and accessories, make sure they fit your setting. Remember, the apocalypse has come and gone, and there have been a few hard years in between. Make a conscious effort to ensure that things look "wasted."



AGE IT UP

Water bottles are generally sleek and smooth; they're symmetrical and have straight lines. In this case, add some dents and damage to make them at home in a broken, gritty setting.



A NEW WAY TO RECYCLE

Items that are discarded in our contemporary world are harder to come by in the wasteland. Water bottles and cans can be kept on-hand to eat or drink from.



TAKE IT WITH YOU

Nomadic people have to carry their belongings with them, so storage and carrying packs are a must. They can range from the simple to the stylish, but should be functional above all else.

Desert Dwellers

If your particular wasteland is full of sun, sand and not a lot else, you'll want to give some thought to how people survive in a desert before you design your characters. Dress them appropriate to harsh conditions, and take into account the punishing weather.



THE DESERT PALETTE

Take your colors from the setting itself. Use washed-out earth hues with a splash or two of color to set the tone, and remember to keep your palette in mind as you work.



VARIETY: THE SPICE OF ART

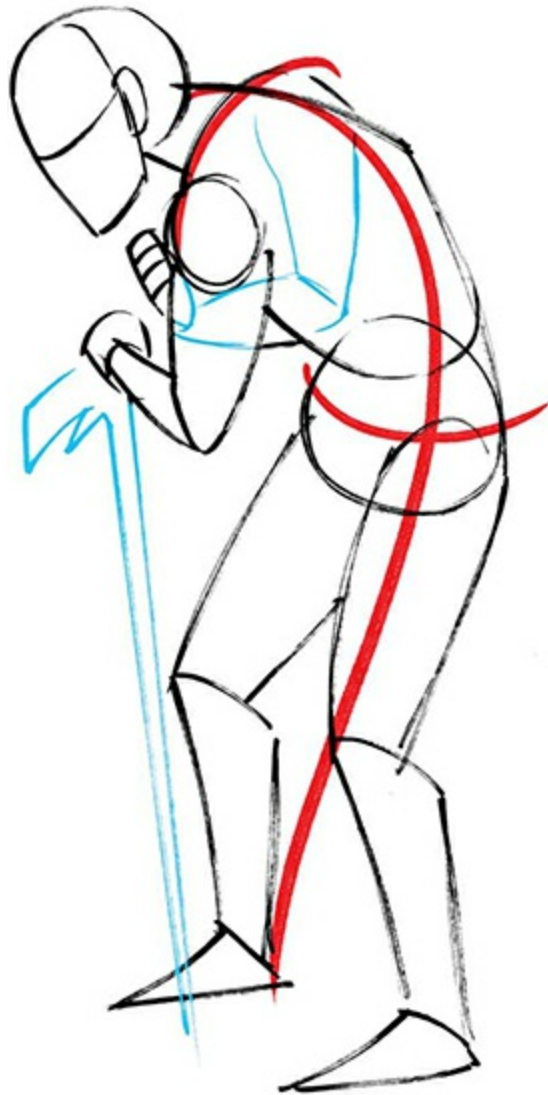
With a bland desert palette, you can't always rely on color ...

DEMONSTRATION

THE SCAVENGER

The pre-disaster world is long gone, and most people have left it behind with hardly a backward glance. Not the Scavenger; he makes it his living. Out in the desert, there are still scraps of technology and furniture, pieces of a long-forgotten way of life. He's out in the heat every day from dawn to sunset, digging deep to find what the sand keeps hidden. When he's cleaned it up and brought it into one of the shantytowns along his trade route, he always finds enough of a barter to make it worth his while.





1 *STRIKE A POSE*

The Scavenger carries the weight of the world—or at least the weight of his stuff. All of his possessions are on his back, so he's extremely stooped over. Add a curve to the spine; it would probably curve even lower if he didn't have a cane.



2 *FILL IT IN*

Start paying attention to anatomical details. The Scavenger is thin, but wiry and strong, so add lots of sharp angles and use barely any curves to show body fat. He has deep-set eyes and defined cheekbones in a thin face, so sketch that in now. Start adding the

general shapes of what he's carrying—just the size of things at first, without going into too much detail.



3 DRESS YOUR CHARACTER

Add definition to his items and outfit. Give some serious thought to what someone in a desert wasteland would carry around with him: lots of water, a bedroll and things he's found and saved for trading. His clothing is simple, with fabric stitched sloppily together, and his

shoes are just leather soles wrapped around his feet with fabric.



4 ADD DETAIL

Ink your pencil sketch and fill in the details. Now is the time to put in the definition on his ribs and thin frame. He's been out in the open a lot, so his belongings are dirty, and he uses haphazard straps and ropes to hold his gear together. He's not actually that old, but the

harsh desert conditions have added years to his appearance.



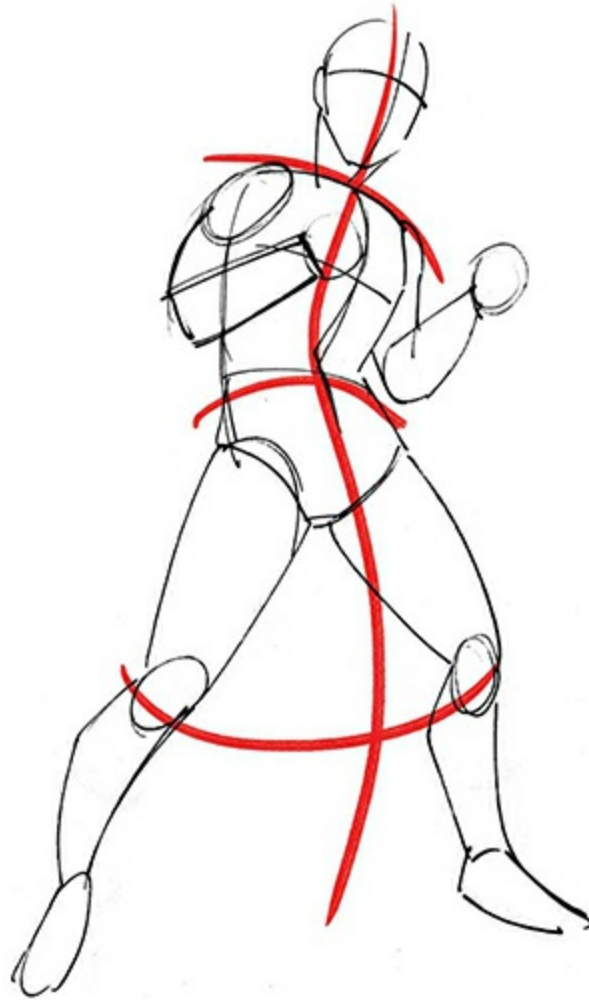
5 *ADD COLOR*

Start layering your color. The tones here are very muted, but surprising little spots of brightness come through in bits from the contemporary past. Be creative. Unexpected equipment like a helmet with stickers or, in this case, a pink plastic laundry basket adds a touch of levity.

DEMONSTRATION ***THE WARRIOR***

The Warrior had a name once. She had a family, too. But that was a long time ago, and those years are dead and gone. What's left behind is a grim shell of a person, with all the softness stripped away. She's been on her own for ages beneath the punishing desert sun and she knows how the game is played. It's kill or be killed out in the vast expanses where nothing civilized dares to tread—and she's killed her fair share.





1 STRIKE A POSE

Start with the pose—in this case, someone getting ready for a fight. Draw the feet planted ...

City Dwellers

Even in the wasteland, there are small bastions of civilization. Here, the environment is more stable, so characters have freedom to experiment in situations that aren't life-or-death. Take the opportunity to play around with fashion and styles. City dwellers are able to create and dye fabric, and the old world has been gone a long time, so the sky's the limit in terms of what's popular.





CROCHETED AND KNITTED GARMENTS

Factory-made fabrics are a thing of the past, but crocheted or knitted garments that can be created by a single person are quite common. Since you're drawing them, the only limit to what they look like is your imagination.



TIGHT PATTERN



OPEN PATTERN

You can see through the gaps in the diamonds in this more open pattern.

DEMONSTRATION ***THE BARTENDER***

In a world gone to pieces, the Bartender forged a place of her own. She used to be a mercenary, but that lost her an arm and a young girl's dreams. Now she runs a water bar where parched travelers can come in out of the heat to quench their thirst. Tough and no-nonsense, the Bartender could write the guidebook on dealing with some of the scum that washes in out of the desert. She'll take their trade goods in barter, but her rules are hard and fast: leave your weapons at the door and cause no trouble. Anyone who breaks those rules is apt to find out that her prosthesis definitely favors function over form.



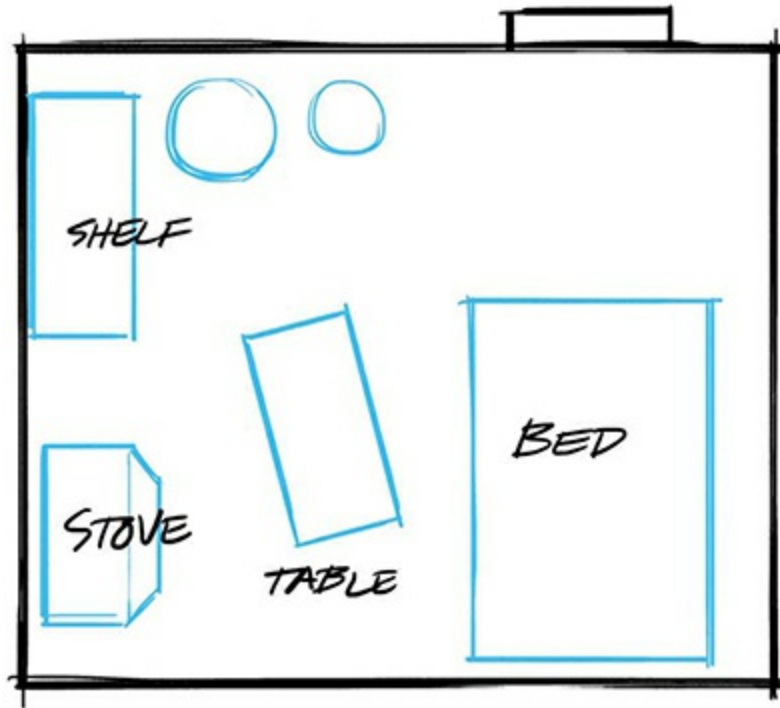
1 *STRIKE A ...*

DEMONSTRATION

SETTING THE SCENE

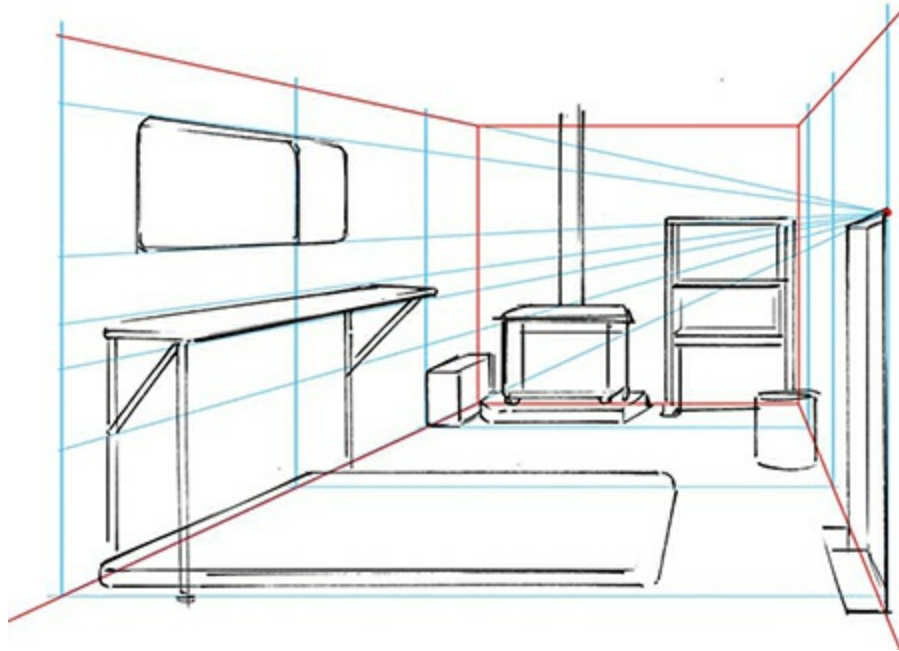
You've designed your characters. You've outfitted them for a desert wasteland. Now it's time to bring their world to life by creating a detailed, believable backdrop for daily life.





1 *ESTABLISH A LAYOUT*

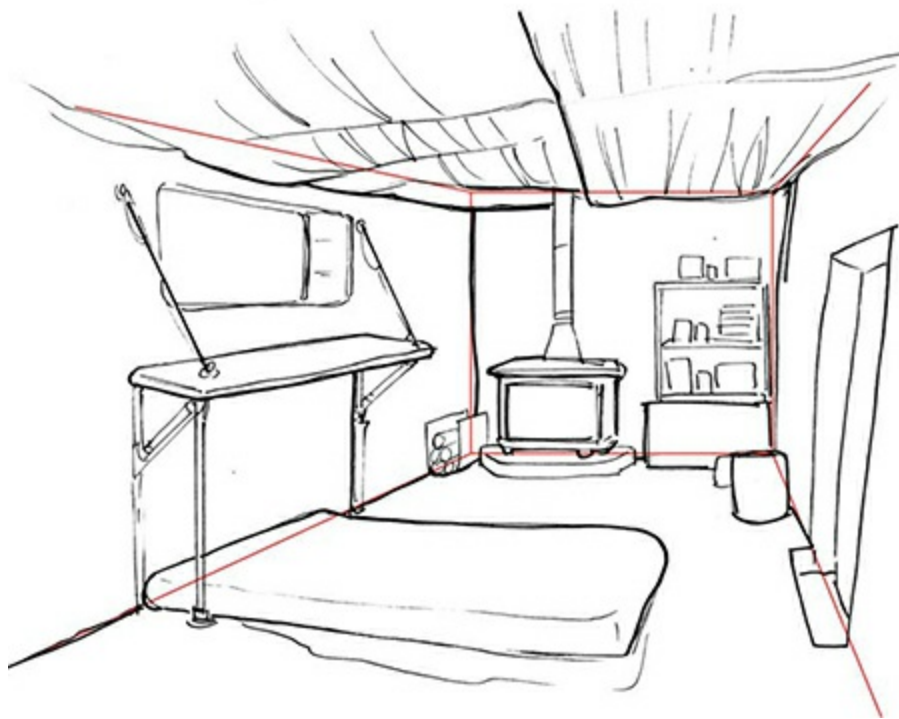
Before you do anything else, start by creating a floor plan overview. This particular setting is a tiny, one-bedroom house, so think about what would be there. Make sure you cover the necessities: a bed, a stove for heating and cooking, a small table and a shelf for storage. (The outhouses are outside.)



2 CHOOSE AN ANGLE AND PUT IT IN PERSPECTIVE

Play around with angles until you determine how you want to frame the scene. An easy way to compare the possibilities is to make lots of quick thumbnail sketches from various points of view. Since this example is only one room, set it up like a cube. Place the furniture where it went in your overview sketch, but change the angle accordingly. This is the angle we'll use for this demonstration. It shows multiple elements of the room and offers a clear view of the doorway and the window.

Now It's time to start figuring out perspective. If you elongate the left wall, it keeps the scene from being too symmetrical and shows more of the window, shelf and bed. The vanishing point is the red dot at the corner of the doorway.



3 ***MATCH THE SETTING***

Start adding more content to the interior. To make it fit into the setting, get rid of most of the straight lines. The ceiling is a bit wavy—a combination of woven plastic and corrugated tin. Even the wall on the right and the doorway are slanted.



4 *FILL IT IN*

Have some fun thinking about the kinds of things that would fit into this type of home. Take into consideration what is needed to live, but also what's comfortable for the family who spends their lives here. Edible plants crammed right next to the window take advantage of the available light. A stove serves for both warmth and food prep. Shelves provide storage, a small table doubles as a work surface and dining area, and the rugs on the floor and the collection of pillows and blankets on the bed add a lived-in touch.



5 *ADD DETAILS*

Now's the time to really sell your setting. Add in little hints of the outside world to tie this home together with what you've already established. The grill of the stove started life as a jeep grill; it's been scavenged from an unusable vehicle. The planters are made of rubber tires, and the window shelf is held up with cobbled pieces of pipe. Everything is showing wear; the walls, furniture and household goods are all a little dingy and well-used.



DAYTIME PALETTE

In the morning, try coloring the scene with natural light, yellows and oranges. Provide a warm tint to the beiges and grays within the house; even the green on the plants is tinted yellow. Add lively expressions to the characters to match the colors and complete the picture of a vibrant, happy scene.



NIGHTTIME PALETTE

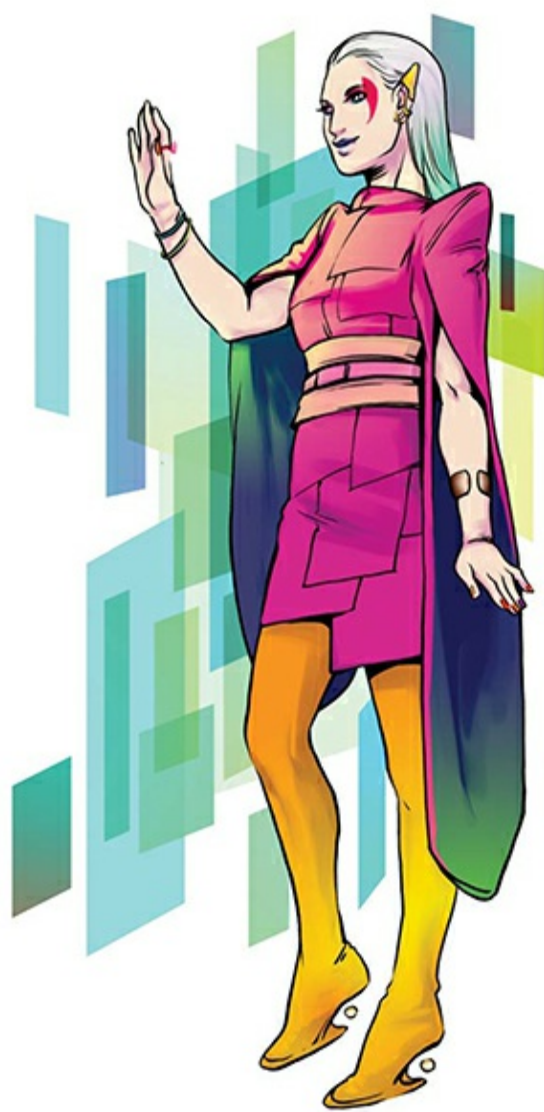
Try leaving the angle and room the same, but switching to a nighttime palette. There is some light coming in through the window, but the blue shadows don't tint the interior. The plants have dulled to a blue-green shade, and the embers in the stove cast a faint yellow-orange glow.

6 EXPERIMENT WITH DIFFERENT COLOR PAlettes

Using a different color palette can give the same scene an entirely different feel.

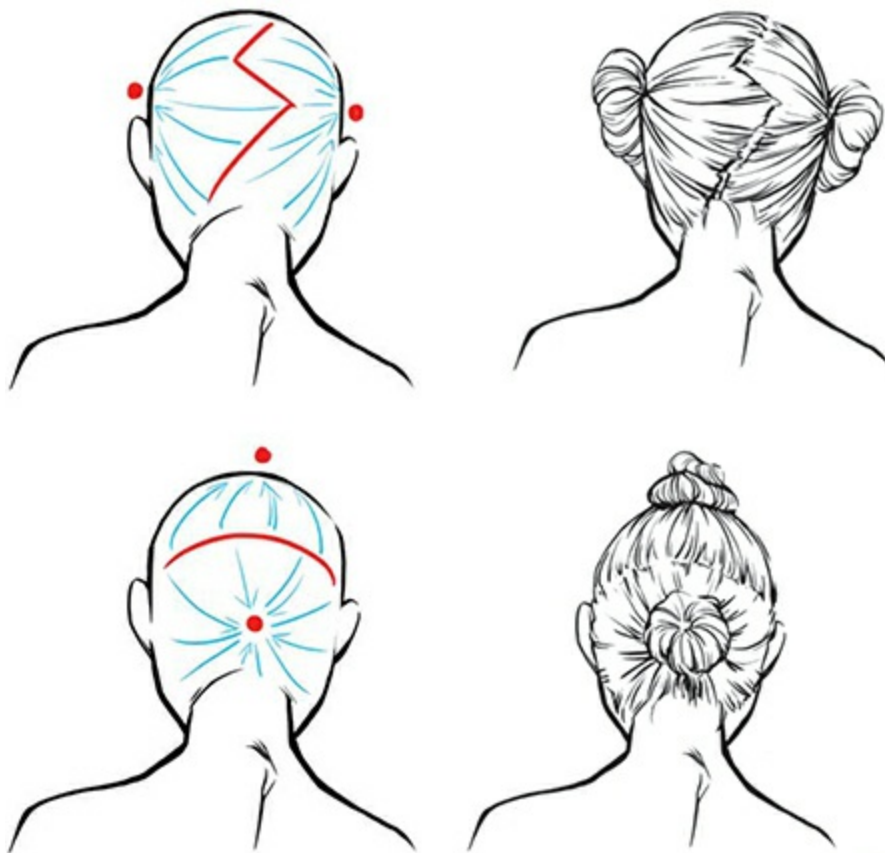
3Urban Dystopia

The future is here—and with it came a government that rules with an iron fist, a huge class divide and a lot of very unhappy people. In the urban dystopia, it's just second nature that the population is divided into two starkly different groups: the Haves and the Have-nots. The Haves live a charmed life in the relative peace and plenty of the city center, spending their days on frivolous pursuits of pleasure. The Have-nots are pushed to the outskirts and forced to eke out a meager existence on the leftovers. Sounds like a recipe for revolution.



Hair

In the glamorous city center, the Haves show off hairstyles that put form over function. Big, extravagant shapes and complicated up-dos are all the rage, but behind every over-the-top style is a basis in anatomy. Before you start drawing, make sure you know how the hair sits on the skull.



DRAWING BUNS

Sketch the head shape and pick the point or points where you want the hair to gather. Then start adding guidelines in the direction the hair will be pulled. As shown by the blue lines, hair curves toward the bun following the shape of the head. Finally, finish the detailing on your hair. The basic process of drawing a bun is the same whether the end hairstyle is simple or elaborate. If you want more than one bun in the final look, just segment the hair at the part lines.

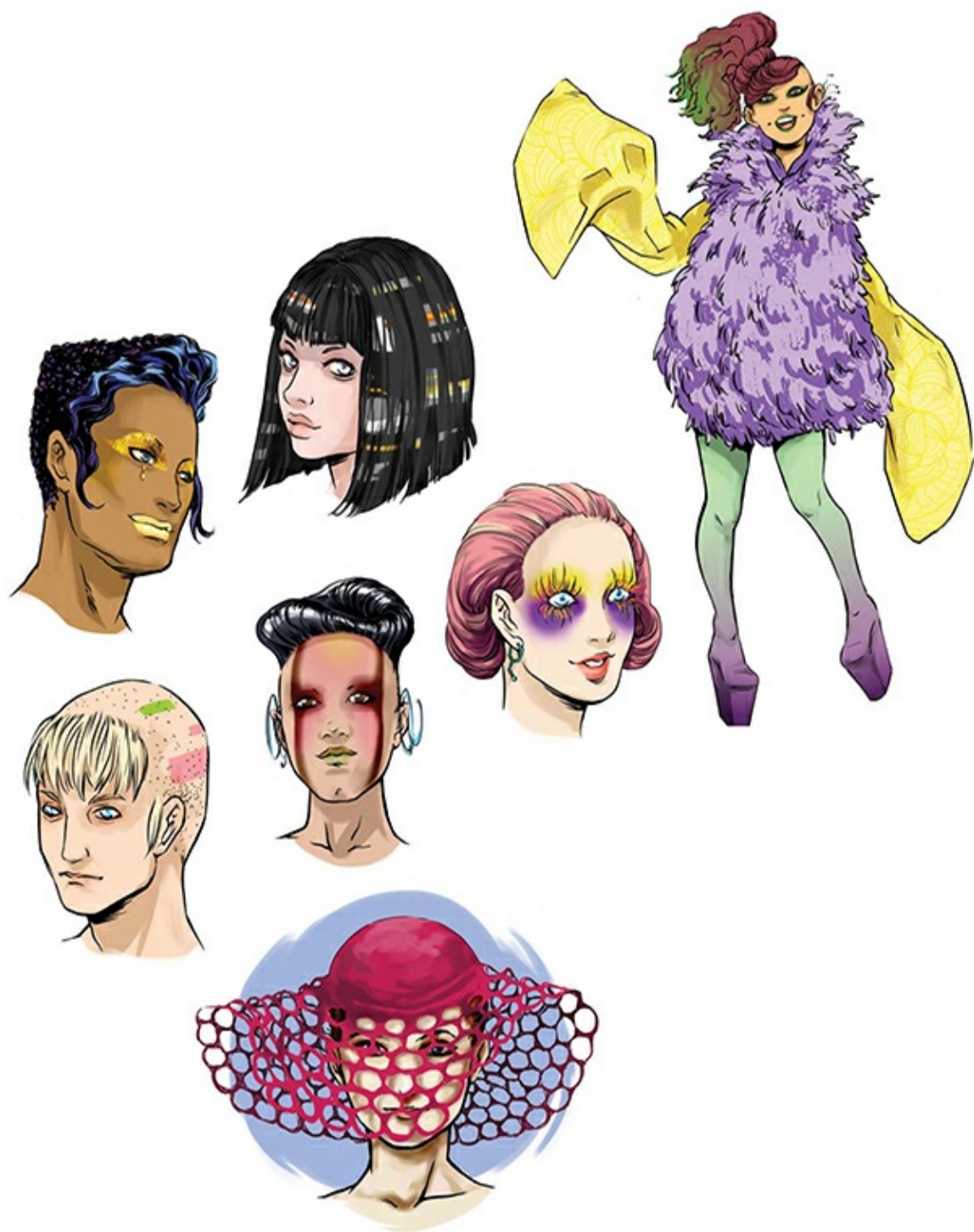


IMAGINATION IS KEY

In a setting like this, it's important to let your imagination run wild. Think bold, sleek and over-the-top. Then try out anything that comes to mind.

Trendsetters

The city center is home to the privileged few, but among those few, the celebrities are revered as fashion gurus and trendsetters. They want to be seen—and everyone else wants to see them—so they adore styles that catch the eye. When you design clothing for this set, reach for the absolutely ostentatious. Take your inspiration from anywhere and everywhere: retro-future sci-fi, historical dress, current couture fashion or anything else that you enjoy.





TRENDSETTER PALETTE

For this palette, go with bright, super-saturated colors that ...

DEMONSTRATION

TRANSPARENT FABRIC

Among the glitz and glam, there's room for fabrics that won't appear in settings that are based in practicality. Flimsy, transparent materials are the perfect illustration of style over substance.



1 OUTLINE YOUR FABRIC

Outline your fabric to show where it will fall in relation to the body. The red lines here show the fabric, and the blue lines show what parts of the body lie beneath it. In this example, the material is stiff and holds its own shape, so it isn't clinging to her form.



2 ***BLACK AND WHITE***

In a pen-and-ink version, use a thinner line or a different pen with a finer point for the outline of the shirt. Also use a thinner line for the parts of the body visible through the shirt. In contrast, the ink lines on the rest of the body and face will be thicker. The difference in line width makes it appear as though the viewer is looking through sheer fabric.



3 *CHANGE THE OUTLINE*

In a colored version, change the outline of the transparent material to white instead of black. This helps to lighten the cloth compared to the rest of the drawing, which still has the heavier black outline.



4 *ADD WHITE*

Add a light layer of white over the surface of the transparent fabric. The sections that cinch together or are flattened by her hand are more opaque. Since the fabric is gathered, there are more layers of it and it's harder to see through.



EXPERIMENT!

Transparent fabric can be used in almost any kind of garment regular fabric can. Try out a few designs and practice coloring them to get the feel for it.

Shapely Figures

For unusual, futuristic-looking fashion, try playing around with geometric shapes. A lot of clothes follow the line of the body, but if the fabric is stiff or contains wiring to help it hold its shape, it can hold almost any form the designer desires.



Light It Up

Who needs glow sticks with clothes like these? If your characters' garments are self-lighting, create a glow effect with a soft gradient and a brighter, nearly white area in the middle. Make the outline the darkest shade of your desired color.



COLOR

Neon hues are the most effective for lighting like this. Don't outline the light strip with black; instead, use the color of the light itself to make it seem less like a solid object. Pay attention to the surrounding garment; the light casts a faint glow on the cloth.



BLACK AND WHITE

Use high contrast to show self-lighting clothes without color. The suit is black, and the lit areas of the suit are bright white. The lit strips and circles have a softer edge to create the impression of a faint glow. They also cast light on the suit, like the lines on her forearm creating a glow against the side of her torso.



THAT HEALTHY GLOW

Try out self-lighting clothes in a variety of forms and on a variety of poses. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

DEMONSTRATION ***THE HOST***

The Host has never known life outside the grand and glittering spectacle that makes up the city center—and he's never wanted to. As the face of one of the city's most popular television programs, the Host has thousands of adoring fans, and he wouldn't have it any other way.

Affable, self-centered and flamboyant, he's in love with his life and doesn't understand why anyone could think the world needs changing. Underneath all the glitz and glam, there's a decent person, but he's so insulated from the hardships experienced by the less-fortunate that he's blithely unaware they even exist.



1 STRIKE A POSE

Try out poses until ...

The Upper Crust

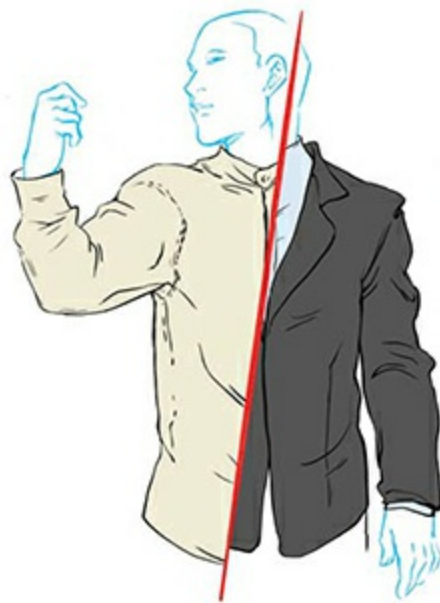
The trendsetters aren't the only ones who live the high life in the city center. Business men and women and various other types of professionals fit right into this world of ambition and luxury. Their clothes aren't as outrageous as the trendsetters', but the designs are still outlandish compared to our everyday wear. Dress them for the office, not a party—complete with that sleek, tailored look. This set cares about appearances, so you can bet their kids are every bit as fashionable as they are.





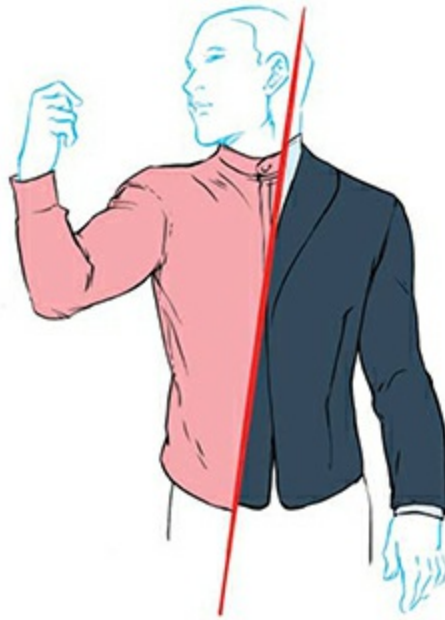
FORM FITTING

A fitted shirt of clingy fabric hugs the body, but not the same way that tailored clothes do. For something more formal, start with a suit as a premise and translate it to your setting. It makes the character look more put-together and calls to mind a business environment.



OFF THE RACK

Before tailoring a suit to your character, try the other extreme. On the left, the dress shirt is too loose, hangs off the body and creates a lot of wrinkles. The suit on the right has sleeves that are too long, the top of the lapels don't rest flat on the collar, and the shoulder seam dips inward.



A PERFECT FIT

Now try tailoring the suit. The end result is a properly-fitted outfit and a character that appears like he has money to spend on a nice wardrobe. Note the differences in the garment itself; it looks much cleaner, and the seams and lines of the clothing fit better.



DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Take the concept of a contemporary suit and use it to create formal business attire for any setting. Just decide on a style and look for your world, then apply that aesthetic to a more conservative manner of dress. For more tips on drawing modern, real-world suits and formal wear, check out *Shojo Fashion Manga Art School: Year 2*.

The Ruling Class

Urban dystopias are not democracies; someone somewhere is calling the shots, and that's the ruling class. As with the upper crust, dress them in expensive, well-tailored clothes. Appearances matter, but they aren't aiming for shock value—the final design should be imposing in both look and palette, but not outlandish. If the rulers don't want the unwashed masses to know who's pulling the strings, masks and veils serve to hide their faces.



TYRANNICAL PALETTE

The palette for the ruling class employs a lot of deep, cool colors. It's ...

Around the World

Cultures from around the world have distinct styles for formal clothes and traditional outfits, and your characters might come from a variety of backgrounds. As the world adapts to the future, fashion in different locations may evolve in different ways, or your characters may opt to take aspects of their personal family history and adjust it to the aesthetic of the city center. If it works for your characters or the location of your setting, consider using different historical dress for your base style before adding some sci-fi flair.



INDIAN SHERWANI

Begin with a sketch of an Indian sherwani, taking inspiration from historical Indian royal garb. To add a sci-fi twist, adorn the turban with a sleek metal shape instead of something more traditional. Adjusting textures will give this garment a different look: the top is styled after a leather jacket, and his boots have an iridescent sheen.



JAPANESE KIMONO

Start by drawing a traditional Japanese kimono. Then replace the hair ornaments with simple geometric shapes. Change the style of the kimono itself to look more minimal and contemporary, and add a central layer (a little like an evening dress) to make the body look sleeker.



TRADITIONAL MEETS FUTURISTIC

Experiment with fashion from around the world. Sci-fi aesthetics don't have to stem from only business suits and lab coats. If your setting is a future Earth, you might want to consider fashion from the country where your story is set to give your characters a unique look.

DEMONSTRATION ***THE SCIENTIST***

Someone has to keep the city center running, and it's certainly not the media darlings and fast-talking politicians. It's the Scientist and those like her: the intelligent, focused citizens who do the research that ensures the city is always on the cutting edge of technology. For the Scientist, work is her life. She lives for pushing the envelope and the fascination of seeing what new possibilities her own advances will unlock. Some may call her dispassionate or even cold, but those people just don't understand where her true dedication lies: the laboratory.



1 STRIKE A POSE

Select a pose that suits your character. For ...

Enforcers

Someone has to make sure the laws of the ruling class are followed. With years of physical conditioning and training in the use of high-tech weaponry, these men and women bring military efficiency and a brutal take-no-prisoners type of law enforcement to the table. They get the job done and will take down anyone who happens to be standing in the way.



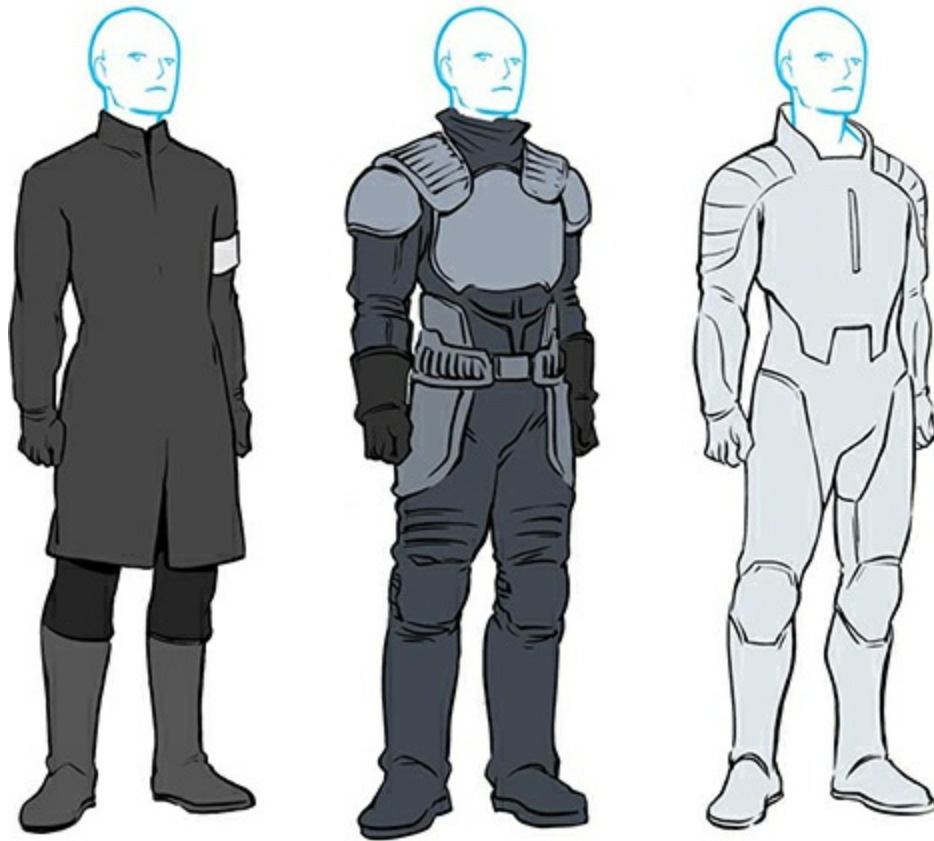
ENFORCER PALETTE

This color palette is monochromatic by design—cold and stark. When the enforcers are in uniform, their armor is designed to make them seem inhuman and intimidating.



HELMETS

When designing an enforcer helmet, keep in mind that the masks would not be personalized because the enforcers wear a standardized uniform. Also, you shouldn't be able to see their eyes. The helmet makes the enforcer behind it anonymous, creating a legion of soldiers that seem impersonal and emotionless.



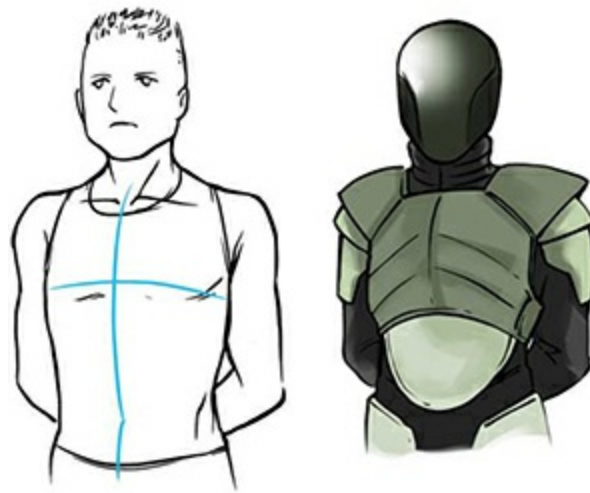
UNIFORMS AND BODY ARMOR

Body armor should cover the entire body with adequate padding to cover vulnerable parts and protect against chafing. The lighter the armor is, the easier it is for the user to wear. Depending on your setting's level of technology, the uniforms can be thinner and sleeker or bulky and low-tech.

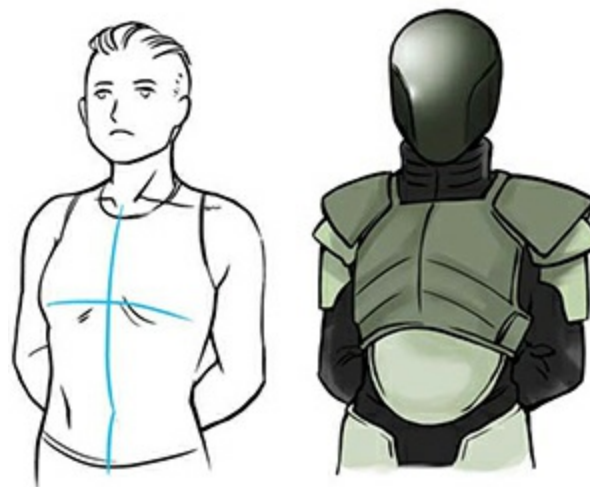
Male vs. Female Armor

Creating differences in male and female armor isn't necessary. Not only does a breastplate with space for each breast look silly, the shape causes the armor to be less effective. In standard armor, blows are deflected to the outside of the body. With frivolous breast shapes

added, those blows may instead be drawn inward due to the dips in the armor, increasing the chance for harm. Most female athletes wear sports bras to compress their chests. The same concept can be applied here so female enforcers can gear up and beat the rebel forces down.



MALE SOLDIER WITH FITTED ARMOR



FEMALE SOLDIER WITH FITTED ARMOR



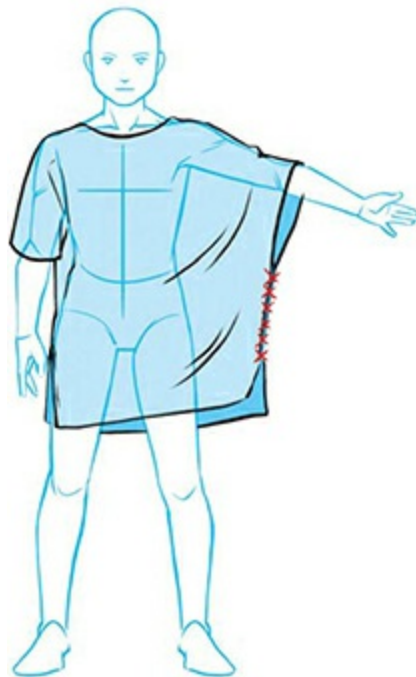
COMMANDERS

These men and women are in charge of the troops and security. While the rank-and-file soldiers are anonymous

and faceless, the higher-ups sport different uniforms to distinguish themselves from those in the field.

Servants

The city center isn't populated entirely by the well-to-do. Their servants live here, too, dwelling alongside the wealthy in order to do the hard work and keep the upper crust happy. Compared to their employers' clothing, the uniforms they wear are simply constructed and can be used to fit various body types without tailoring.



KEEP IT SIMPLE

Create a servant's uniform with a simple design; most employers won't pay for something more elaborate. For

a plain look that's easy to replicate, start with two sheets, sew some of the sides and leave openings for the head, arms and legs.

HEADGEAR

Hats and other head pieces are a good way to round ...

The Rebellion Underground

Away from the city center, life is much less the glitz and glamour of the obscenely wealthy and much more the daily grind of doing thankless work to survive. From birth, the odds are stacked against those born into the wrong locale; there is no escape, no upward mobility and often not even the means to live comfortably from day to day. It's little surprise that the determined few have taken it upon themselves to stage a rebellion, intent on turning the dystopia's harsh measures and cruel politics upside down.



UNDERGROUND PALETTE

For this palette, select colors from the natural world, ranging from the off-whites of cotton, wool and linen to dyes from plants and minerals. Do a little research to

see what's available; nature provides a wider range of colors than you'd expect.



MADE BY HAND

In contrast to the sleek, manufactured look of clothing in the city center, here on the outskirts try to include more homemade garments. Knitted, crocheted or homespun fabric will lend your characters a touch of seeming self-sufficiency.



PRACTICAL IS FASHIONABLE

When designing your style, keep in mind everyday use. Characters here can't afford tailored clothes, so belts can help with pants or skirts that don't fit perfectly. Some people may prefer dresses, but they get worn to work, not a night out on the town. Try adding large pockets to provide convenient storage and make them more practical for the wearer.



SHOES

Away from the city center, shoes are designed to handle wear and tear, not to turn heads. A sturdy pair of work boots will last the owner years. Galoshes can be slipped over footwear to preserve them from more unsavory tasks.



TOGS FOR TOTS

When you're dressing kids in a setting like this, make the garments a bit worn. Children are rough on their clothes, and people keep hand-me-downs or share among neighbors when a new baby arrives.

DEMONSTRATION ***THE REBEL LEADER***

The Rebel Leader never asked for this job. She just wanted to keep her head down and stay out of trouble, but the best-laid plans often go awry. Now she's the head of the underground rebellion, and even though she wasn't planning on taking part, she's uniquely suited for the job. She's a natural: strong, capable and charismatic. The dystopia's Have-nots have been downtrodden for so long that they've started to forget what hope looks like—but with the Rebel Leader carrying the banner, there just might be light at the end of the tunnel.

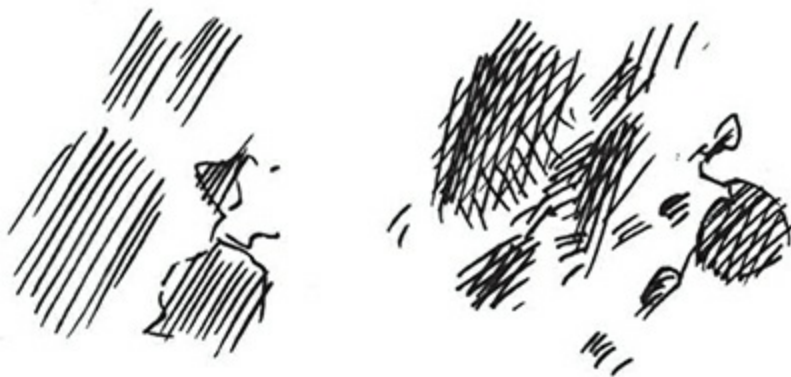


1 STRIKE A POSE

Start with your sketch. For the Rebel Leader, pick something action-oriented. ...

Dirty Jobs

It's a dirty job, but someone's got to do it—and the ones in power, living the life of luxury in the city center, are going to make sure it gets shunted off onto someone else. In an urban dystopia, work conditions are poor, and there's next to no consideration for the comfort or safety of the workers. Filthy uniforms and unfortunate industrial accidents are the standard, not the exception.



STAINS

Create stains by inking with a simple hatching technique. If you want darker, dirtier stains, layer some crosshatching on top of your original lines.



CAKED-ON MUD

Thick mud, dirt or clay can change how you draw the outlines of things. For example, the front of this boot doesn't look like smooth rubber anymore; the ink lines follow the shape of the mud instead.



ROUGH ON THE HANDS

What does your character do for a living? If they're a laborer from the working class, their hands ought to show it. Be sure to include rough knuckles, callouses and dirt ground into the nails.



SHOWCASE DIRT WITH COLOR

Try showing dirty patches with color. Dark smears of grime stand out when they're in contrast to a lighter hue behind them.



CROSSHATCHED DIRT

Show darker stains by going over them repeatedly with crosshatching.



INKED DIRT

Blackening out entire portions of the drawing works if you want a completely filthy look.



COLORED DIRT

If you find it easier, skip inking your stains completely, then add them later when you color.



BRUISING

Use the same crosshatching technique for bruising that you would for stains. It's all about the context. If the eye underneath that crosshatching is swelling, the viewer perceives it as a black eye instead of dirt.



EVEN SCARS

To make an even scar, like a character might receive from a blade, draw the cut and the dots where the stitches went. As it heals, the scar pulls at the normal skin on the edges, so it looks a little jagged.



UNEVEN SCARS

Determine what caused the scar before you start drawing; that will affect the shape. Keep in mind that scar tissue is lighter and looks shinier than the usual skin tone, and address the differences while coloring.



LARGE-SCALE ACCIDENTS

Even if your character has no visible scars, there are other ways to show a past injury. Major accidents might result in missing fingers or limbs.



FROM A DISTANCE

For smaller cuts or scars, you don't have to use quite as much detail when the character is farther away. It's OK to leave out the jagged edges as long as the shape remains the same.

Looking to the Past

What people wear is a highly personal choice, and family history and cultural background can contribute to a character's sense of self. In a setting like the urban dystopia, in which history has been rewritten to suit those in charge, honoring the past or the traditional can be a rebellious act. While designing clothes for the underground, keep in mind your character's family history, cultural background and what he or she might choose as a symbol of freedom or self-expression.



CHEYENNE PLAINS TRIBE DRESS

Start by learning the traditional dress of someone from your character's culture and then decide if your character would ...

DEMONSTRATION

THE CON MAN

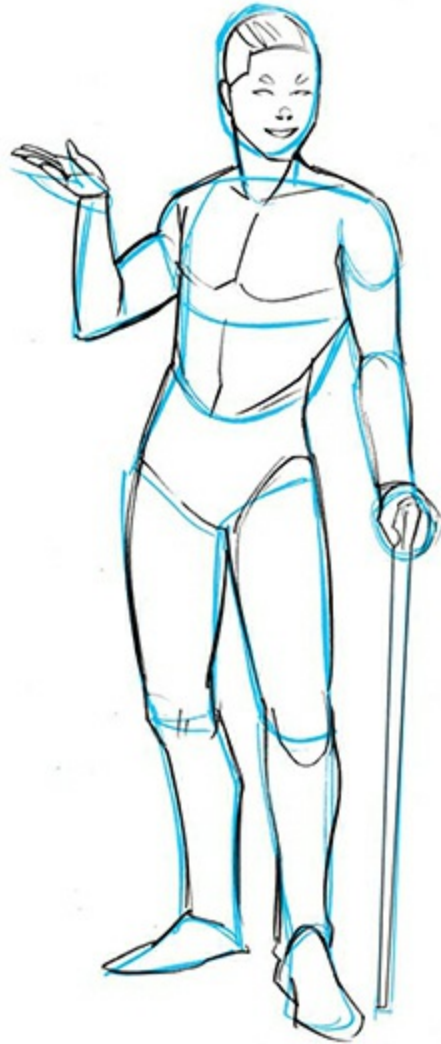
The Con Man started life as a street kid and he learned to lie for his supper early on. As he grew older, the lies only grew more elaborate. Now he flits between the city center and the outlying slums with a charming smile and whatever pretty deception he needs to put money in his pocket. If asked about the rumors that his ill-gotten gains are bankrolling the rebellion, he'd swear they were nothing more than that—rumors. What do you take him for, anyway? Some kind of sap?





1 STRIKE A POSE

Draw up a few sketches, then pick the one you like best. For the Con Man, who's charismatic and personable, choose a relaxed pose. His posture is a little flirty, with his hip jutted out as he chats away.



2 *FILL IT IN*

Take a good look at your original sketch and identify the areas you can improve, then fix the proportions. Here, in comparison to the original, the head is smaller, the shoulders are slightly raised and some of the limbs are a bit longer.



3 DRESS YOUR CHARACTER

Decide what your character will be wearing. The Con Man spends a lot of time in the city center talking targets out of money, so dress him in the same style as the rich folks he wants to impress. His shirt and pants are pretty simple, but they're very colorful. Use the jacket and hair to add a bit more flair.



4 ADD DETAIL

Start working in the personal touches that will bring your character to life. For a social character like the Con Man, pay extra attention to his face and mannerisms because they're vital to his personality.



5 *ADD COLOR AND ACCESSORIES*

Select a palette to match the city center's aesthetic, since that's where the Con Man does most of his work. Opt for bright, highly saturated colors that catch the eye.

Break up the large blocks of color on his clothing by working in some patterns. You can also give him a touch more flair (and practice an earlier lesson) by adding a self-lighting walking stick.



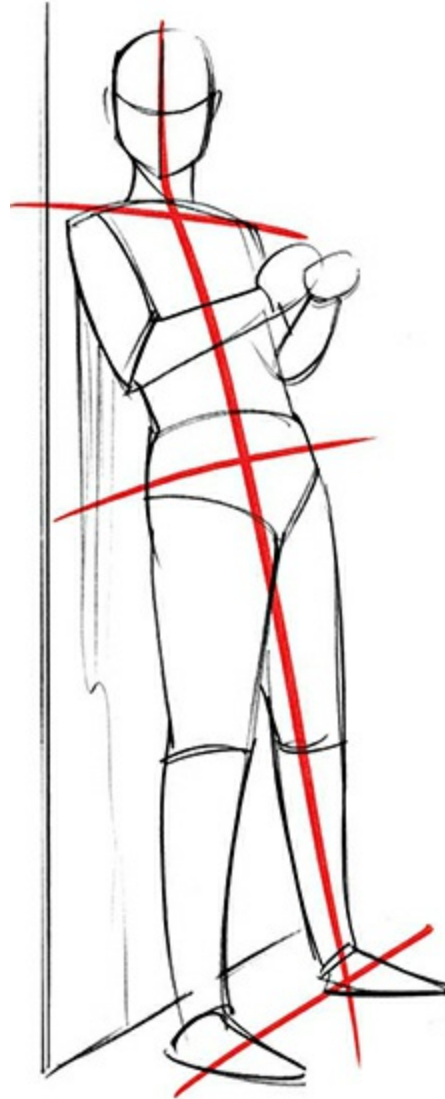
EVERYDAY WEAR

The Con Man runs his schemes in the city center, but he lives in the slums where he grew up. He's adept at blending in no matter where he is, so try designing a casual outfit for him, too—something he can wear when he's not showing off for targets.

DEMONSTRATION ***THE REPORTER***

Not everyone who is trying to make a difference is cut out to be part of the rebellion. The Reporter always had a way with words, and she plans to show the tyrants in the city center that the pen is mightier than the high-tech laser weapon. Bright, tenacious and stubborn, the Reporter is willing to follow a lead to the ends of the earth if it will bring her closer to the truth.





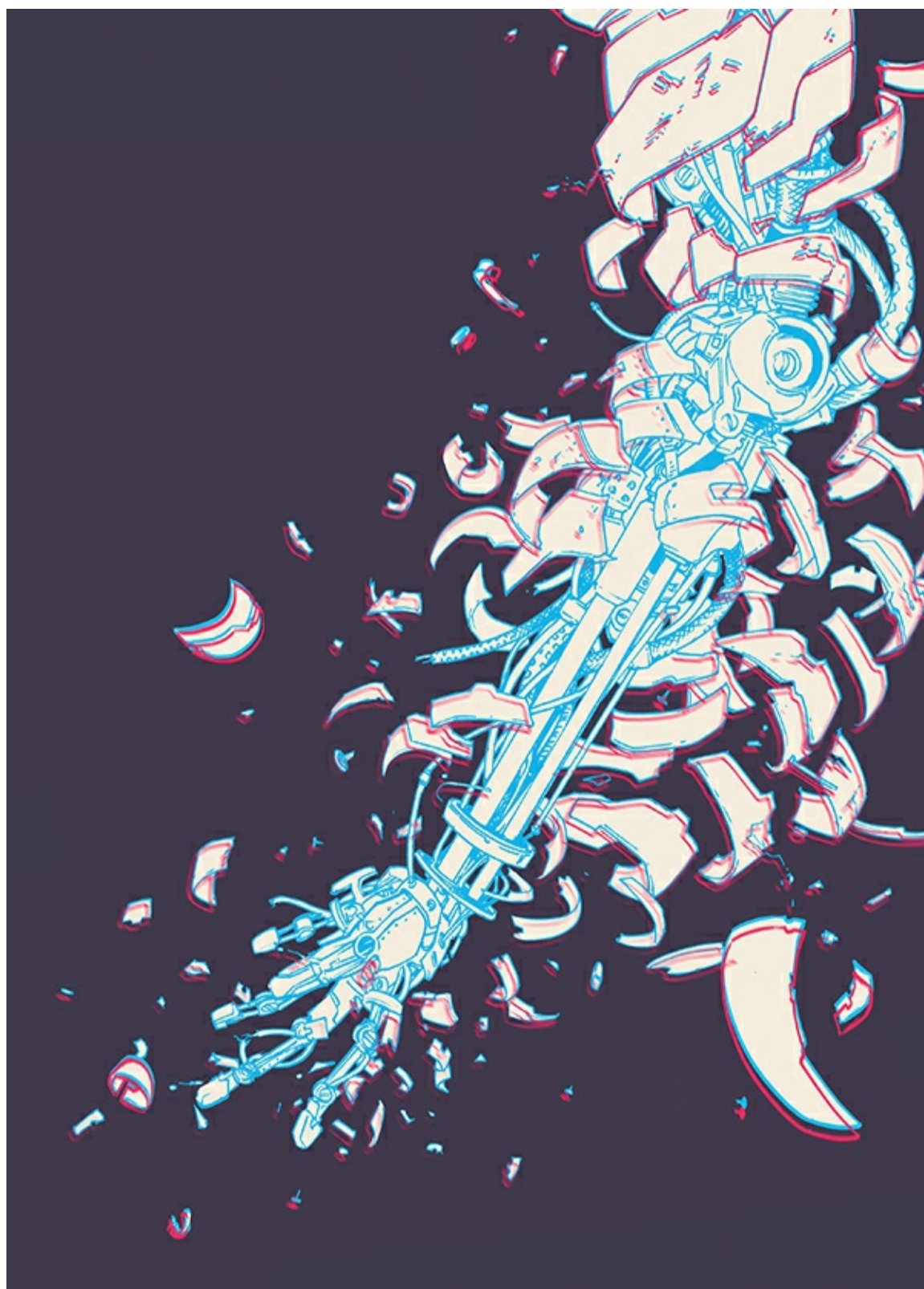
1 STRIKE A POSE

The Reporter can get in people's faces and press her case, but she knows that there is a time and a place to step back and listen. ...

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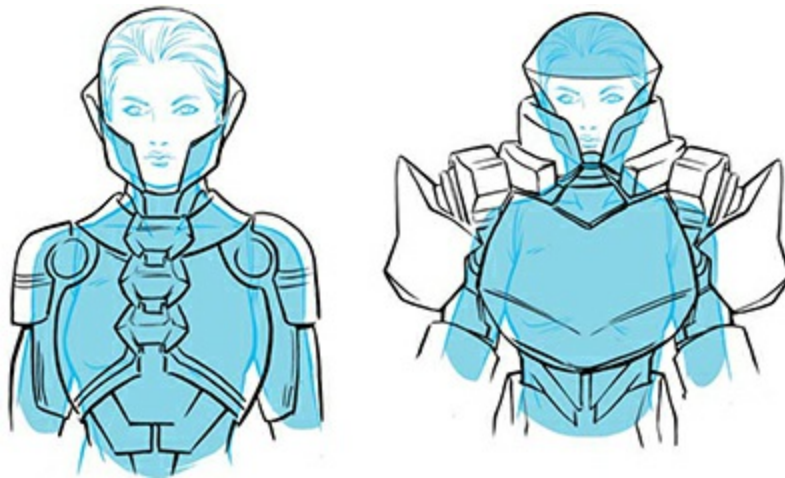
iRobot

While the term *sci-fi* encompasses a multitude of styles, settings and accessories, one unifying theme is that it employs technology you don't see on modern-day Earth. Yes, that means gadgets. Sometimes, it even means spaceships. But mostly, it means that timeless sci-fi staple—the robot. Like the genre itself, robots come in all shapes and sizes, from the cute and helpful house robot to the massive mecha so popular in Japanese manga. Depending on your setting, the aesthetic of your technology can vary greatly, but knowing a few basics can help you get started.



Exosuits

Exosuits are robot suits worn directly over the human form. They do anything people can do—but better. In addition to being an effective defensive shell, they enhance the wearer's strength, increase endurance and house high-tech weapons.



ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

Styles of exosuits can vary as widely as styles of clothes do. You can adjust size as well as appearance (the way you did for the body armor in [chapter 3](#)), but make sure to leave room for padding, wires and circuitry. Higher levels of technology mean less space is needed on the interior, so that affects the look of the suits.

BREAK IT DOWN

If designing an exosuit all at once ...

DEMONSTRATION

DESIGNING AN EXOSUIT

When your characters are ready to suit up and save the world, make sure they're equipped to do it. Start by designing an exosuit that's practical and aesthetically appealing.



1 START WITH A SKETCH

When designing an elaborate costume, it always helps to create a rough sketch of it first. This lets you fine-tune your design without a huge time sink; if you decide you don't like it, you haven't wasted hours getting every

angle perfect. Try sketching it from the front, the back and the sides. When you come up with one you like, keep your initial design on hand for easy reference.



2 DESIGN THE BOTTOM LAYER

Figure out what your character wears underneath the exosuit. Keep the outfit fairly tight so it won't catch on anything, bunch up or be uncomfortable.



3 ***ADD YOUR SKETCHED SUIT DESIGN***

Work in the suit design you sketched earlier. It should sit over the body, and the limbs of the suit should correspond to the character's limbs.

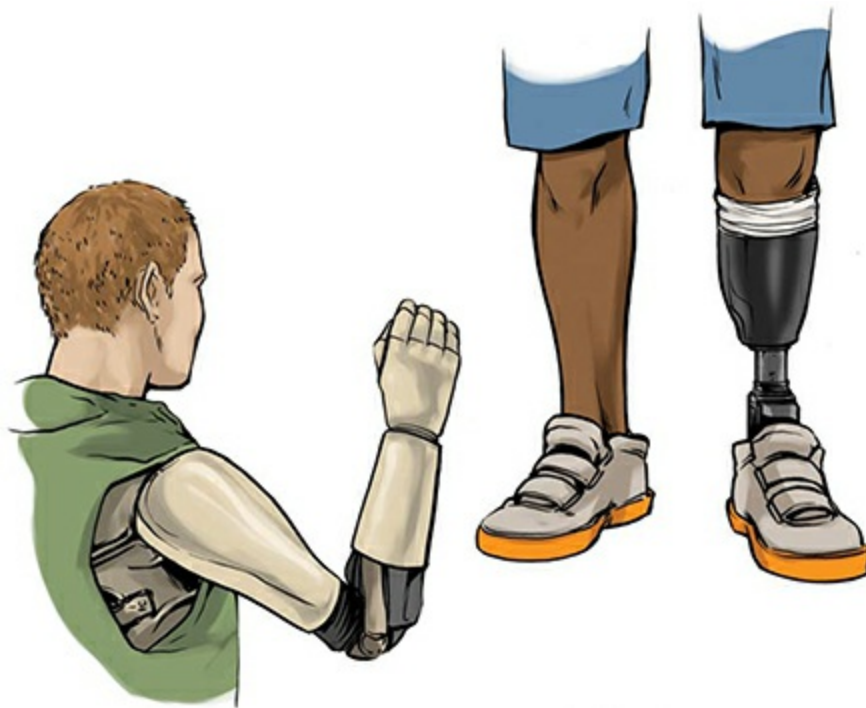


4 *FINISH IT OFF*

When you like what you have, commit to your design. Now you can fill in the details, ink the drawing and polish it up.

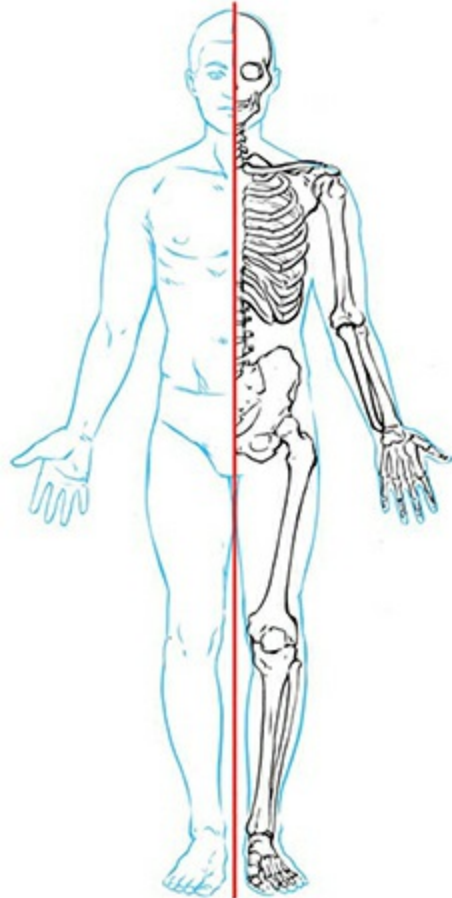
Prosthetic Parts & Enhancements

Not all wearable tech has to be full-body. In fact, in a setting with advanced robotics, it should be expected that prosthetic parts and enhancements for regular people have kept up with technology. When you're designing characters, keep in mind the new array of options, and feel free to make use of them.



MODERN PROSTHETIC LIMBS

Prosthetic limbs already exist in our world today, and their technology and appearance is constantly evolving. Try looking at existing examples for inspiration.



STUDY THE SKELETON

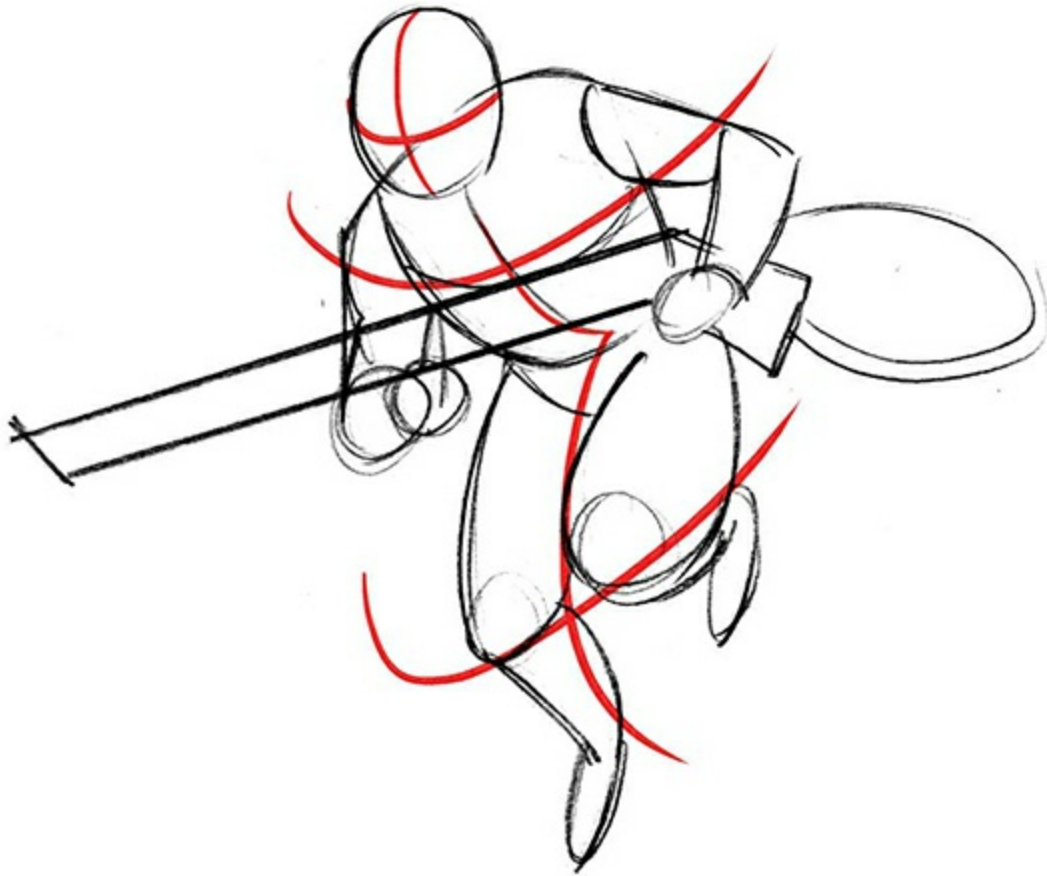
A good ...

DEMONSTRATION

THE MERCENARY

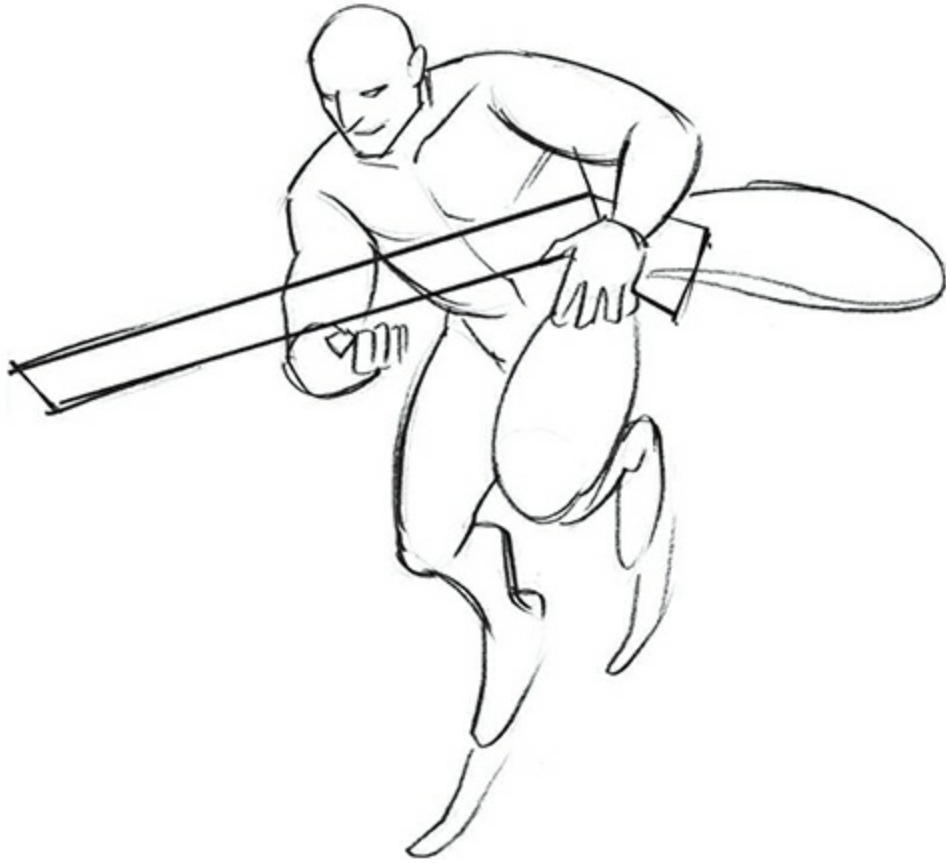
In an intergalactic space-age setting, criminals don't just leave town—they skip the planet. That's when the Mercenary gets called in to pick up the ones who have outrun the long arm of the law. With every job he completes, he sinks a little bit of his profit into a new prosthesis or some shiny new high-tech weaponry. Now, after twenty years on the job, his closest friends joke that he's a walking arsenal—and most of the criminals he rounds up take one look and wave the proverbial white flag.





1 STRIKE A POSE

The Mercenary is a man of action, so sketch an active pose for him. Give him a purposeful, forward-moving stance—he's a man on a mission. Build a base for his compact, barrel-shaped frame. Make sure he has a solid grip on his rifle, too.



2 *FILL IT IN*

Refine his anatomy and start placing features. To give him some personality in contrast to the no-nonsense pose, work in a smirk to show he's a confident guy who enjoys his work. He's going to have prosthetic legs, so start sizing down his calves and feet; when you're finished, he'll have running blades.



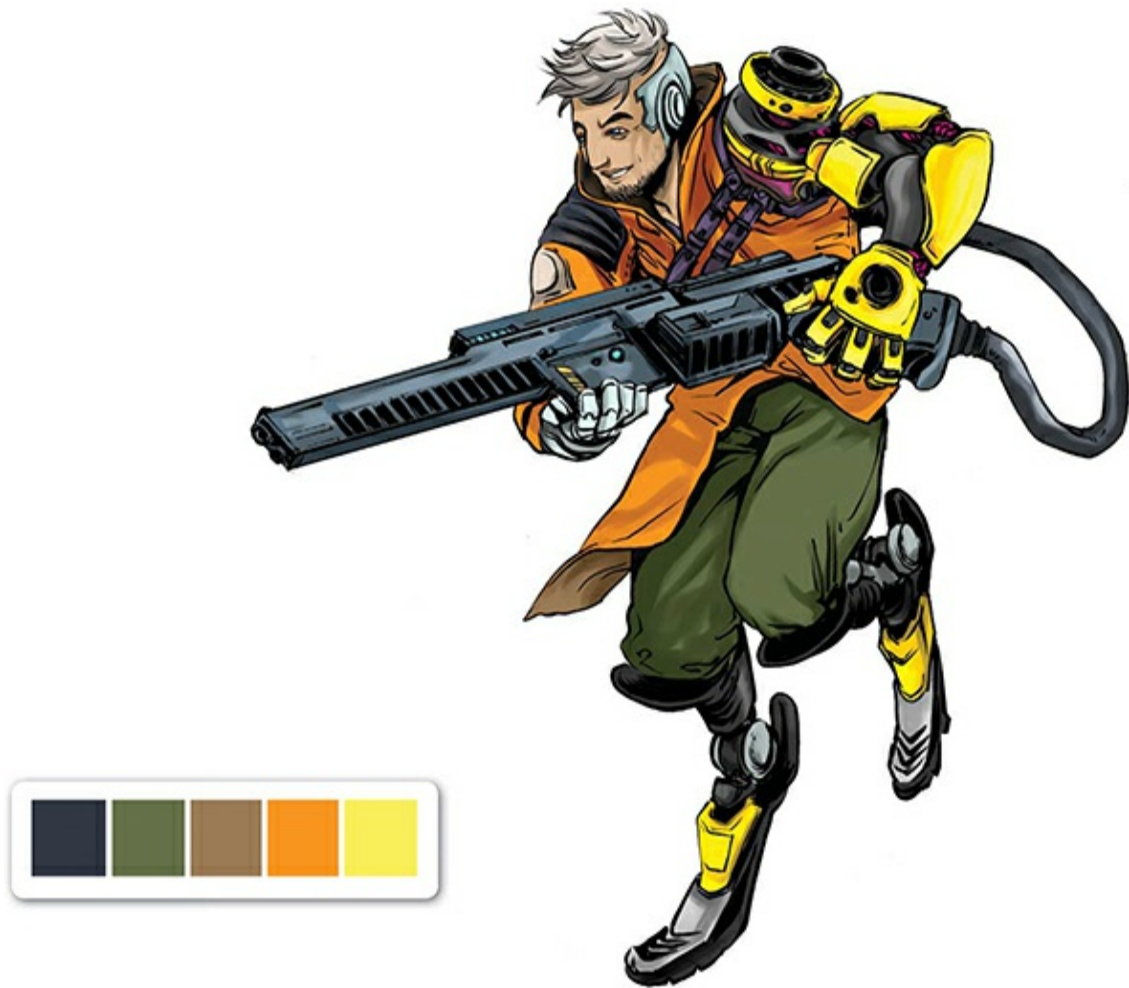
3 DRESS YOUR CHARACTER

Put some clothes on him, now that you have the preliminary details. You'll also want to enlarge the left arm to create a powerful prosthesis. It only has four fingers, which gives it less finesse—but it's built for strength, not manual dexterity.



4 *ADD DETAIL*

Refine your sketch and start layering in detail. You have a lot of opportunity here to add different levels of wear and tear, since the Mercenary got his prostheses over time. Denote his older, worn parts with scuffs and scratches. Make the newer ones sleek and shiny.

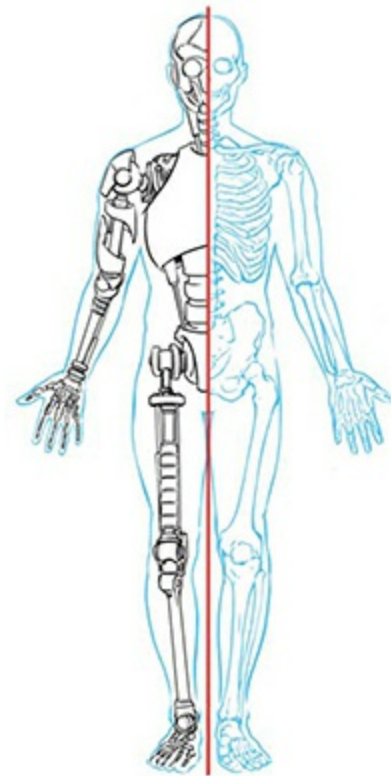


5 *ADD COLOR*

Some mercenaries are covert, preferring to wear camouflage and preserve the element of surprise. Not this one! Add a splash of bright color like orange, and give him custom paint jobs on his prosthetic limbs. He wants his targets to see him coming—and tremble in fear.

Robots

Robots have been a time-honored tradition of science fiction since early in the genre's history. They vary wildly from source to source, offering a huge array of options in terms of looks, attitude and human-like characteristics. Before designing your robot, give plenty of thought to how it functions and the general aesthetic of your setting. With that in mind, start to build.



FROM THE BONES UP

When you draw a humanoid robot, the metal frame has to compensate for the work the bones would do in a regular human. Try sketching a human skeleton side-by-side with a mechanical frame to get a feel for how the metal parts will interconnect.

5

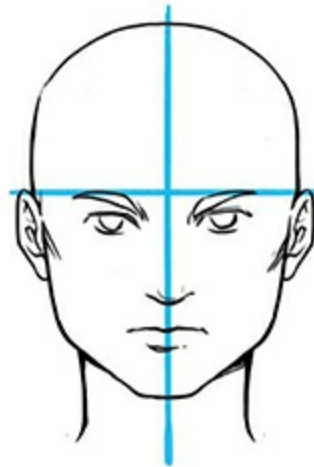
The Final Frontier

It's out there, far beyond the planet Earth: the vast and awe-inspiring reaches of space. In science fiction, travel among the stars, human colonies on distant planets, and even alien creatures are not only possible, but commonplace. If your characters are gearing up to catch a rocketship to the other side of the universe, take some time to explore the unique artistic challenges presented by life among the stars.



Aliens

Far-off worlds often come with inhabitants, and those inhabitants, by virtue of being something completely outside our realm of experience, offer a huge opportunity for unique designs. Let's be real—a lot of the aliens that influence science fiction are humanoid just because it's cheaper to put some face prosthetics and makeup onto human actors. With art, you have a lot more freedom, and designing alien creatures is one area that lets you really flex your creative muscles.



A HUMAN FACE

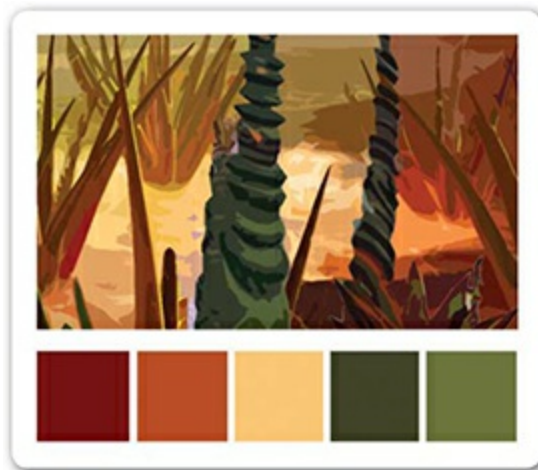
If you're going to draw a humanoid alien, start with the human face as a guideline.

BUILD UP YOUR FACE

Once your guideline is in place, tweak the features ...

Alien Worlds

If you're having trouble coming up with ideas for alien designs, start by creating the world they come from instead. Animals evolve and adapt to their habitat; why not make it the same for creatures from another planet? Think of an idea for a world first, then see where your imagination takes you.



Red Swamp

This world is humid and almost tropical. It's covered in lots of flora, swamp, and jungle.



ANIMAL LIFE

Aliens on this planet might use the surroundings to camouflage themselves. They look like the flowers or trees that grow in swampy ground.



HUMANOID LIFE

The dominant species are lithe, with froglike appendages that make it easy for them to get around in the swamp. It's a hot, wet environment, so their clothes are light and probably waterproof or quick to dry.



Gas Giant

This world has no land or even water. It's completely made of gas, which means that all its inhabitants will need to be able to travel through the air.



HUMANOID LIFE

Some aliens on this planet are humanoid, with changes to enable them to glide through the air. Gone are the useless feet and legs, replaced instead with flaps that enable propulsion like a manta ray.



ANIMAL LIFE

Try creating alien forms that are similar to animal life on Earth. The whale already has a mechanism to swim through liquid—with a few tweaks, you might be able to make it take to the sky instead.



Ice World

This planet is harsh and unforgiving. It has a lot of snow, ice and rocks, and not much else.



HUMANOID LIFE

The aliens on this planet are thick and strong, built to withstand the cold. Even though they only have furs from the native animals, they can survive in the extreme weather.



ANIMAL LIFE

Like Earth's woolly mammoths, the animals on this world will need blubber and thick, protective fur to keep them warm.



Dark Gem World

This planet is far from any stars, so it catches little light. What illumination there is reflects on the crystals formed on the planet's surface.



HUMANOID LIFE

On a world like this one, large eyes will help the inhabitants catch whatever light is available, and large ears will keep the aliens from being quite so reliant on vision. If the inhabitants are intelligent, they might design clothing or objects that increase the available light.



ANIMAL LIFE

In a world where vision makes little difference, most creatures will have no pigment. A lot of the fauna are

blind, as eyesight does little to aid survival. Natural camouflage might be based on touch as much as sight.

Space Exploration

Way out in the darkest reaches of the farthest galaxy, intrepid space explorers press the limits of the known in order to discover everything outer space has to offer. Despite the dangers, their mission for knowledge pushes them forward—and with a top-of-the-line spaceship, dazzling technology and the brightest minds in all the known worlds, their voyage will take them to the unmapped ends of the universe.



UNIFORM PALETTE

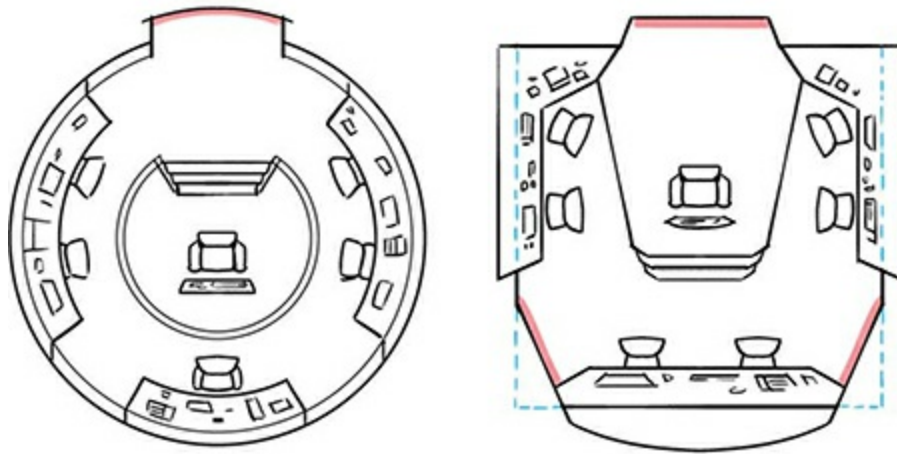
This crew is well organized and well put-together, so they wear uniforms when they're on duty. Select a group of colors to use as a base for their garments, and stick with it. Consider giving each shade in the ...

DEMONSTRATION

THE STARSHIP CREW

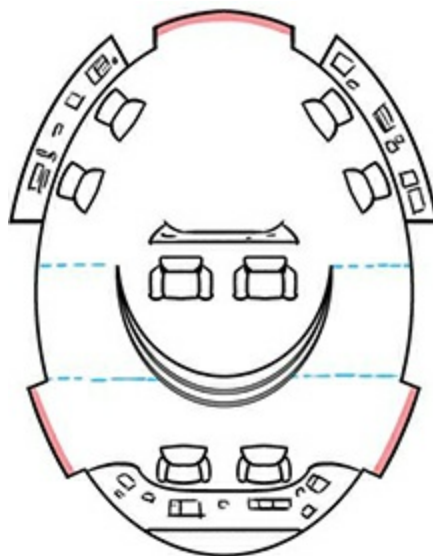
In galaxies far beyond our own, there sails a starship packed with cutting-edge technology and a group of professionals who are experts in their fields. The Starship Crew doesn't all hail from Earth; they're certainly not all human. They span a huge variety of personality types and appearances, but their unending search for knowledge, steadfast commitment to the pursuit of justice and dedication to their work and to each other bind them together more closely than the ties of any country.





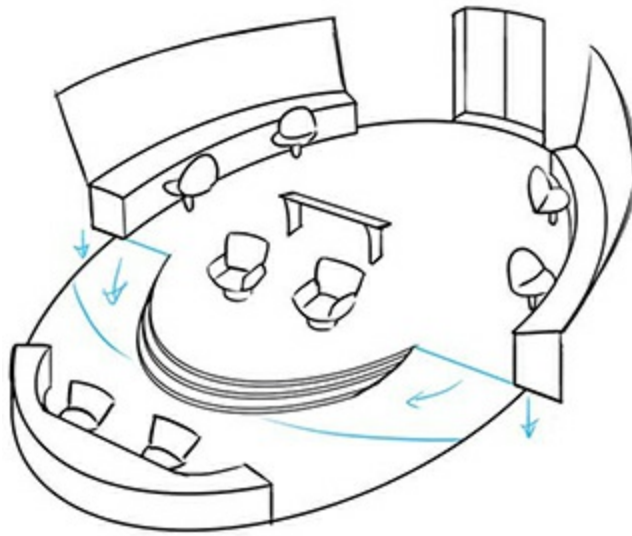
1 *SKETCH SOME FLOOR PLANS*

The bridge is where a lot of the action and decision making takes place, so your crew will spend a lot of time there. You'll make your life easier later on if you have a layout design in advance. Start with a floor plan. First, decide what you need: seats for the captain and first officer, controls for the pilot and co-pilot in front and seats facing various monitors and panels for the other crew members. Mark the doorways in a different color.



2 *SELECT A DESIGN*

Take a look at your sketches and decide which one you like best. The size and configuration are all up to you; the layout doesn't even have to be symmetrical, although symmetry does look more orderly. For this example, we'll use an oval-shaped bridge.



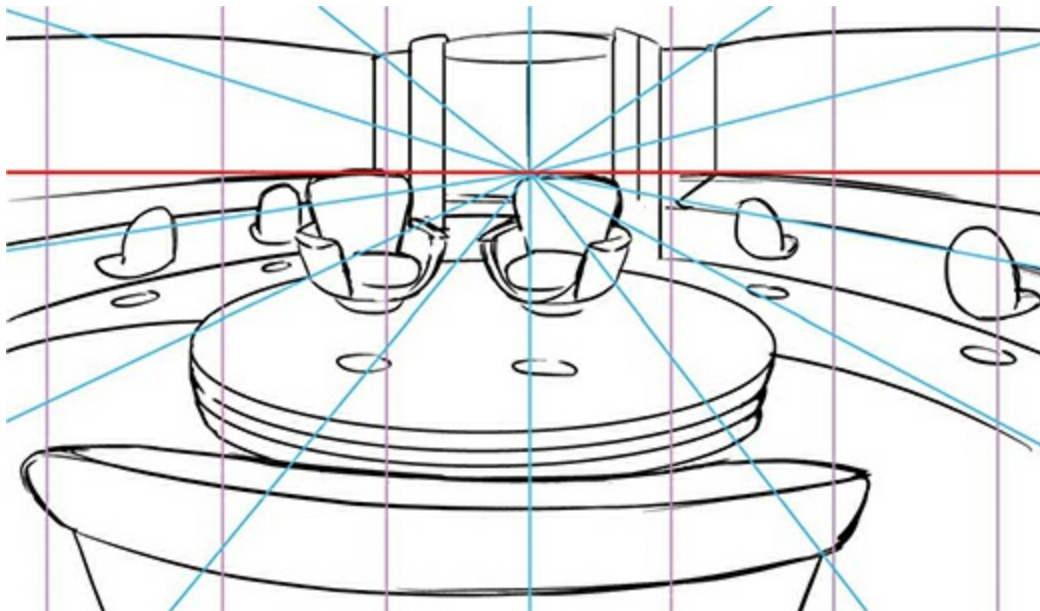
3 *MAKE IT 3-D*

After deciding on the floor plan, draw a three-dimensional concept of the bridge. If you're drawing a graphic novel, you can use this image as a reference to help visualize the possible angles to use in various scenes. This image should start to show things the floor plan did not, such as the change in elevation on the higher platform leading down to the pilot seats.



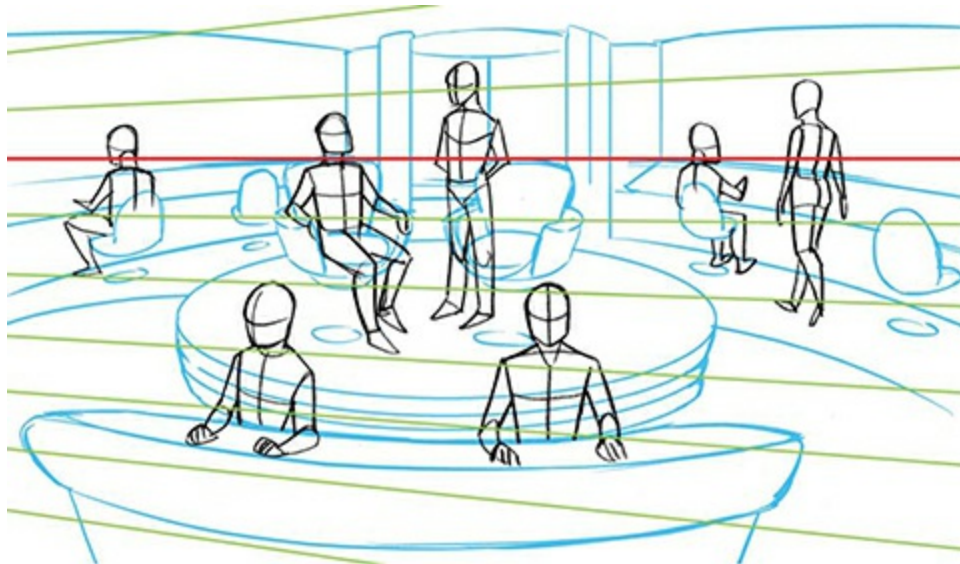
4 *SKETCH THE SCENE*

Now that your bridge is ready, sketch the scene you want to set there. For this example, we'll show several characters and use an angle that's a bit off-center. The perspective doesn't have to be perfect yet; once you have the concept, you can work it out in further detail.



5 *TRY SOME PERSPECTIVE*

Next, you're ready to draw the environment and make sure your perspective is in place. Set your vanishing point to a spot in the middle of the image at the line where the elevator doors close. Draw a red horizon line that follows the top part of the desks, then add a set of blue lines that radiate out to create a guide for the ship's interior. Vertical lines in purple will help make sure the vertical lines in your ship are straight. Be sure to curve the outline of the ship itself because the room is oval.



6 FINE-TUNE THE PERSPECTIVE

Add another vanishing point to the far left of the image, off-panel, then draw the green lines that radiate out from that point. Next, start to sketch your characters. They need to interact with the environment, but make sure they aren't displacing items that can't move. All of the characters should look like they're on the same

plane to keep things in proper scale. The red horizon line will pass through the necks of the seated characters and the torsos of the standing characters. One of the green lines also lines up with the heads of the pilots. A lot of measuring and fine-tuning is needed to make sure the perspective looks right, but it'll pay off in the end, and you won't have to do a lot of corrections.



7 *ADD DETAIL*

After getting all the measuring done and finalizing crew locations, it's time for the fun stuff. Start adding more detail to your crew members and the bridge. If you want to keep the ship clean and streamlined, don't add too much; the plain lines will go a long way toward giving it a minimalist, high-tech look.



8 *INK IT*

Start adding your ink, but keep it simple with just a few shadows under the console and stairs. The sleek and solid look of the ship should contrast with the crew members, who have natural movement and clothes with asymmetric creases and shadows. Leave the screens and panels blank; you can fill those in later when you color.



9 ADD COLOR AND LIGHTING

Select a palette to color your bridge, primarily cool greens and blues from the bridge materials and view screens. Your characters will add an extra splash of color.

The ship interior is actually rather small, so keep it bright and well-lit to make sure the space doesn't look cramped. Try tinting the lighting blue so it looks a little bit cold and distant, like outer space.

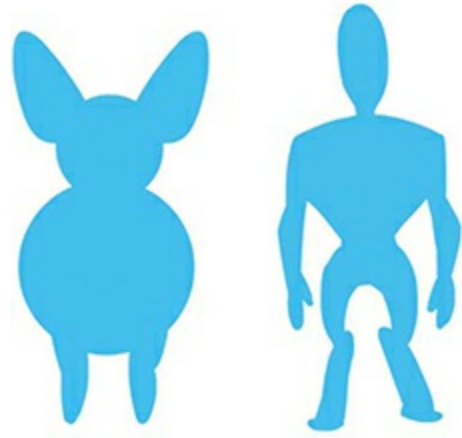
Inhuman Shapes

Creating characters by sketching silhouettes is a quick, easy way to get some variety in your designs, and it works doubly well for alien creatures. To create unique looks, sometimes it's easier to start out with shapes and not let the details bog you down. This technique is especially helpful for populating a crowd with many types of creatures.



HUMAN SHAPE

Before you start creating alien forms, begin by sketching a basic human silhouette for comparison.



ALIEN SHAPES

Next, create some outlines that look anything but human. Play around ...

Space Opera

In the distant reaches of space, amidst planets populated with fantastical beings and breathtaking vistas, a battle is brewing. It's a battle between good and evil, told with high adventure, grand clashes of opposing forces and maybe even a hint of romance. The stakes are high, the weaponry puts the fiction in science fiction, and at the end of the day, the heroes will stand victorious.



SPACE OPERA CLOTHES

When you're designing clothes for the sub-genre of science fiction known as a space opera, aim for the showy and elaborate. This particular type of tale is usually big and bold, both in storytelling and in visuals, so don't shy away from getting too fancy.

Glamour From Beyond the Stars

To get a handle on drawing elaborate clothes for your space opera, focus on just one part of the costume and make that particular part more ornamental. Try an over-the-top hair style or a fancy hat or a patterned cape. Remember, these characters are living in space, so feel free to design an alien to go with your new look.



DEMONSTRATION ***ADDING A REFLECTIVE SHINE***

Jewelry and trinkets are tricky to draw because without the proper sheen on the metal, they look flat and texture-less. To practice, try your hand at adding a metallic gleam to a simple shape.



1 PICK YOUR COLORS

First, select three colors—a midtone, a shadow and a highlight. With highly reflective surfaces, the highlight will almost be white, while the shadow is extremely dark. The sharp contrast between the two captures the feel of a reflective surface.



2 ***SELECT A LIGHT SOURCE***

Decide where the light in your ...

DEMONSTRATION

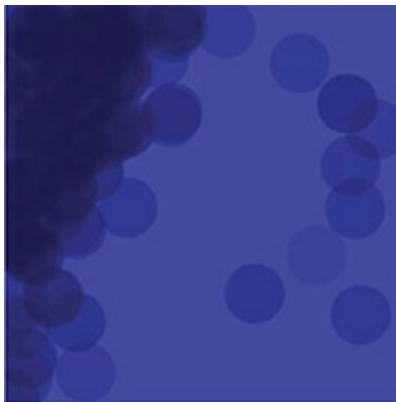
ADDING SPARKLE

Another way to make an elaborate outfit even more eye-catching is to add some sparkle. Follow these steps to make your character's clothing twinkle like the stars.



1 PICK YOUR COLORS

Before you start, select three colors. You'll want a mid-tone, a highlight and a shadow that all stem from the same hue.



2 LAY IN DARKER TONES

The mid-tone area is where the light shines. Put that in first, then use the darker tone for shadow. Use dots to represent sequins or glimmering beads—anything that goes on fabric to make it shine.



3 ADD THE HIGHLIGHT

Start adding the highlight color on the area where the light reflects off the material. If you overlap the colors, it creates an effect that seems random.



4 MAKE IT SHINE

Add a smattering of smaller circles to act like light

glinting off the material and a few tiny sparkles in white. The circles in this sample are like very large sequins.



5 PRACTICE THE TECHNIQUE

Now that you know how to add some glitter to clothes, practice working it into a few of your costume designs.

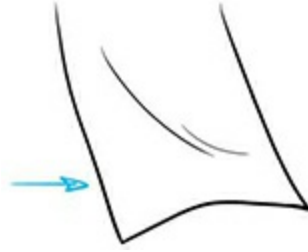
Flowing Fabric

Space operas abound with wise, mysterious types, and be they old or young, man or woman, their role is to set the hero on a path to knowledge and victory. These prophets and teachers tend toward obscuring clothing to promote a sense of enigma, so let's take a look at how to draw flowing fabric. If you're interested in more tips, check out *Shojo Fashion Manga Art School*.



NO WIND

The best way to practice drawing flowing fabric is to start with a single piece of cloth. No wind is blowing, so it hangs limp.



A SLIGHT WIND

Fabric moves ...

The Good Guys

Most space operas feature an epic battle, and on one side of it stand the brave men and women struggling to save the universe as they know it. Consider your setting while designing the look for your heroes, but here are a few tips that will help you get started.



GOOD-GUY PALETTE

When selecting your palette for the good guys, choose warm tones, tinted yellow and red. Earth tones are also a good option here; they look inviting and comforting and instantly set the viewer at ease. Without knowing anything else about a character, the palette you color them with can do a lot to establish the mood.



PILOT

Even though this pilot is wearing a helmet, the faceplate is transparent. While you're designing battle wear for your heroes, try to keep the faces visible. Being able to observe a character's expression humanizes them for the viewer—even if they do happen to be an alien.



OLD GENERAL

Remember, a space opera is set far from here and many, many years in the future. Try changing up the expectations in your clothing design. For example, this general doesn't wear a uniform at all. She just looks like a wise, old grandmother.



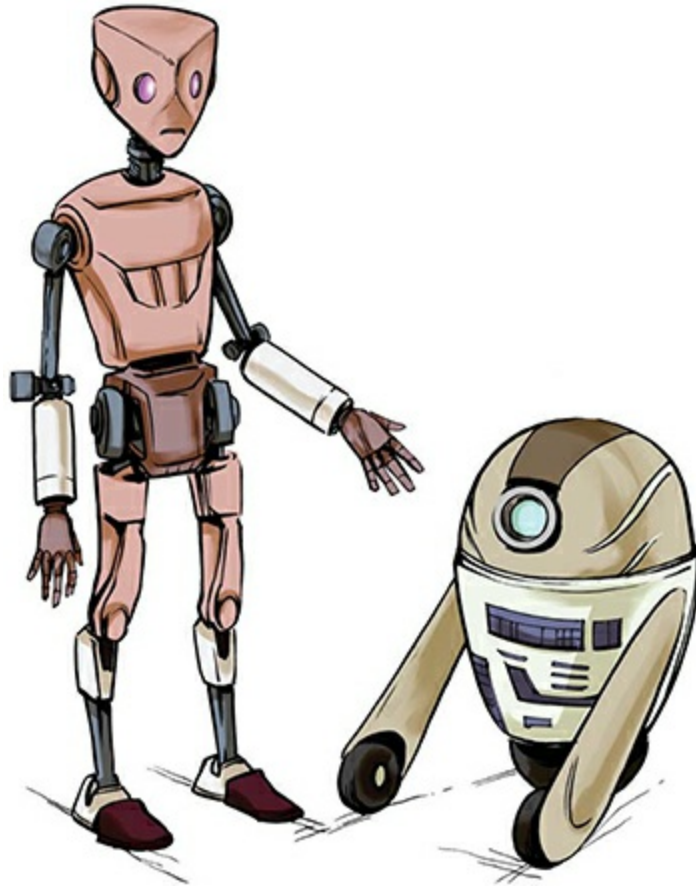
WHITE KNIGHT

Even in an outfit with such bland colors, it's possible to get some warmer tones into the picture. Using comfortable, visually appealing colors will subconsciously clue the viewer in to the fact that a character is friendly and welcoming. On the flip side, using this kind of visual shorthand for a character who ultimately betrays his friends might help to throw off expectations.



ALL WALKS OF LIFE

In a battle of the size and scale seen in most space operas, all hands are welcomed to the cause. Showing variety in your character designs will go a long way toward telling the wide-spread appeal of the fight, all without a word.



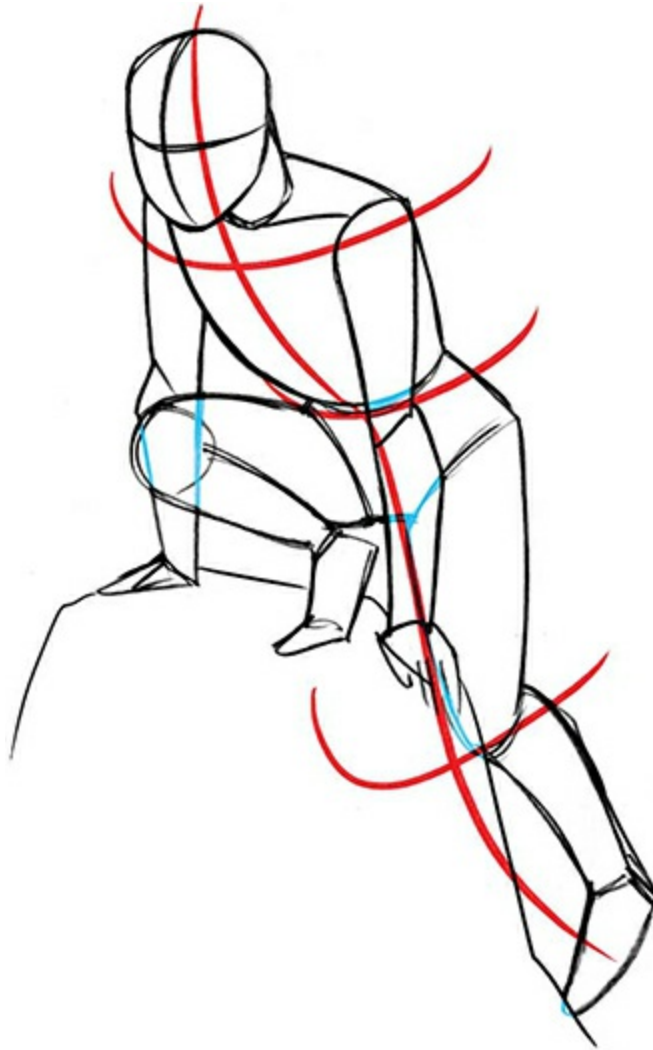
ROBOTS

Not all supporters of the cause have to be human—or even living. Like many sub-genres of science fiction, space operas tend to be heavy on the robots. When you design them, try for amiable and appealing, and bear in mind that the heroes are the kind of people who treat mechanical creatures like family, so keep them in good repair.

DEMONSTRATION ***THE CHOSEN ONE***

The Chosen One grew up on some backwater planet where breaking the soil was a rough way to make a living. She did it anyway, and the hard work, early mornings and calloused hands made an honest woman of her. She's optimistic and practical, handy with a wrench and takes whatever the universe throws at her without batting an eye. Good thing she's so open-minded—she just so happens to be the Chosen One proclaimed by the prophecy, harboring a mysterious power within.





1 STRIKE A POSE

For the Chosen One, select an active pose. ...

The Bad Guys

In every legendary clash of good versus evil, the heroes need opposition to make their struggle a battle to remember. While you're crafting the bad guys for your space opera, keep in mind that the threat should have some sense of consequence, but stay away from cartoon villains. Make sure your bad guys have a well-thought-out design and believable motivations, just like the heroes.



COLOR PALETTE OF EVIL

To set the tone for your bad guys, select a palette based heavily in black and cool grays. Lighter tones are also OK, but tinge them with blues, greens and purples. Opt for cool colors, as opposed to the warm and inviting tones for the good-guy palette. Red is the exception—feel free to throw some in for menace. It's the color of blood and anger, and it carries a lot of emotional associations for the viewer.



SOLDIER

When you're designing a head piece for a villainous character, opt for a helmet that hides the face. Keeping a character's expression out of view adds a sense of detachment and anonymity.



ASSASSIN

Try combining a few tips for villain design in the same character. This assassin's outfit employs the color palette we picked earlier for our bad guys. Her face mask also partially hides her expression; with it on, she seems cold and mysterious. Later, if you want a scene that reveals more of her motives or establishes her character in further depth, try removing the mask. It will make her more relatable.



OLD GENERAL

Use a character's outfit to say something about him as a person. Without knowing anything about this man, we can tell that he's neat, well-groomed and somewhat intimidating. He wears a uniform and keeps a military bearing, and his body language makes him seem hard and unapproachable.

One Color, Many Looks

When your palette consists mostly of black, it can sometimes look flat and plain. Use texture to add some interest, and experiment with different ways to set characters' outfits apart from one another.



LEATHER

Leather can be shiny, but it's not as over-the-top bright as metal or beads. Go heavy and dark on the shadows, and when you add highlights, they should be almost white. You can work in some extra design elements by picking out the seams.



COTTON

Cotton isn't very glossy, so use less contrast when you shade it. Don't make the highlights as bright as you would for leather.



WOOL

With a wool shirt, make sure the texture of the fabric is visible at certain points on the garment to emphasize that the cloth isn't smooth. You'll end up with a shirt that looks warmer and thicker as a result.



TINT YOUR COLORS

Sneak some color into your dark palette. Grays are basically black with white added, but feel free to tint with other shades as well. Adding a hint of violet, green or blue will create visual interest in a piece of art with a lot of dark tones.



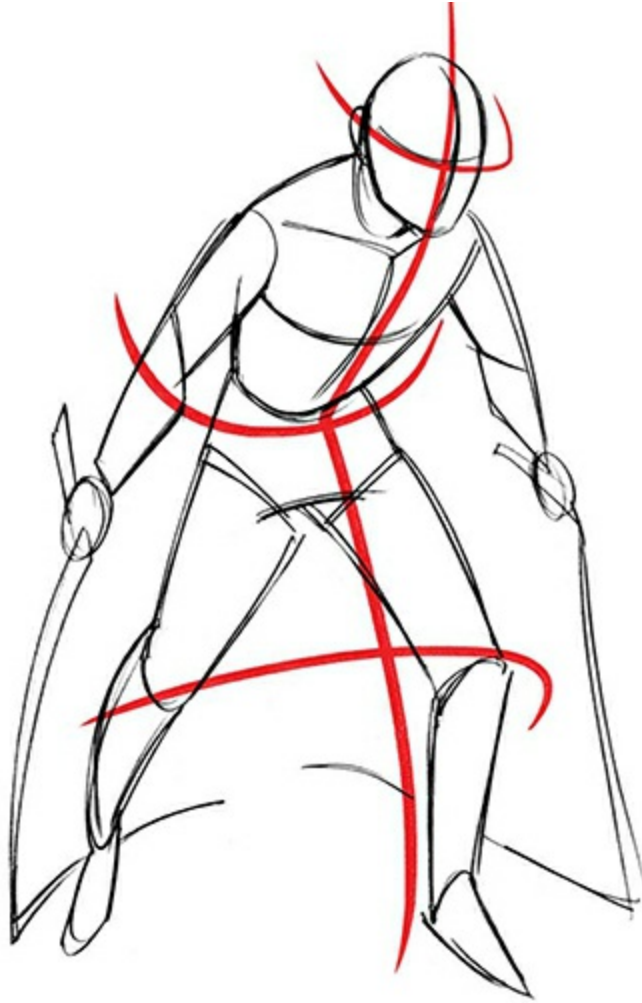
TEXTURE WITH INK

If you don't plan to color your piece, you can still add texture. Just work it in when you ink; it's possible to create a huge range of costumes, even in art that's entirely black and white.

DEMONSTRATION ***THE MAN IN BLACK***

The Man in Black is shrouded in mystery, and he serves as a counter-point to the Chosen One in almost every way. Where she's guileless and straightforward, he deals in manipulation and lies. He's the shadowy face of a powerful and unscrupulous organization on the far edges of space, but what makes him most dangerous is that he truly believes his path will lead to a better world order. He, too, has a power lurking deep within him, but he recognizes it for what it is, and it's not the power of light.





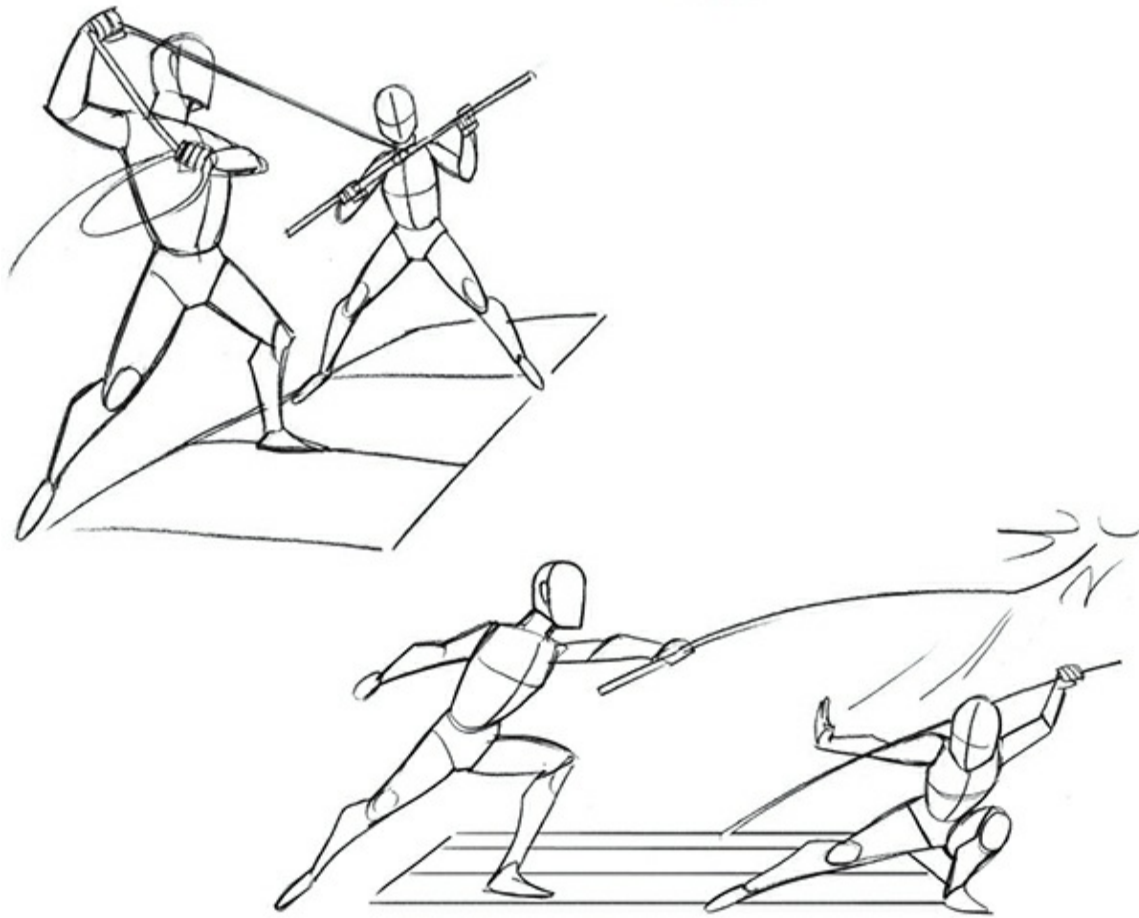
1 *STRIKE A POSE ...*

DEMONSTRATION

THE DUELISTS

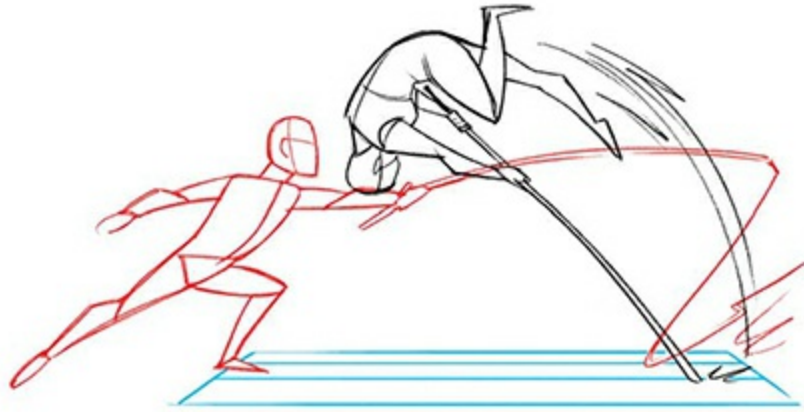
The duelists come together as a symbol of opposition: light against darkness, good against evil, polar opposites trapped in a battle as old as time itself. At the climax of their respective stories, the Chosen One and the Man in Black fight for what they each believe to be right, bringing to bear the mysterious power that lies within them both.





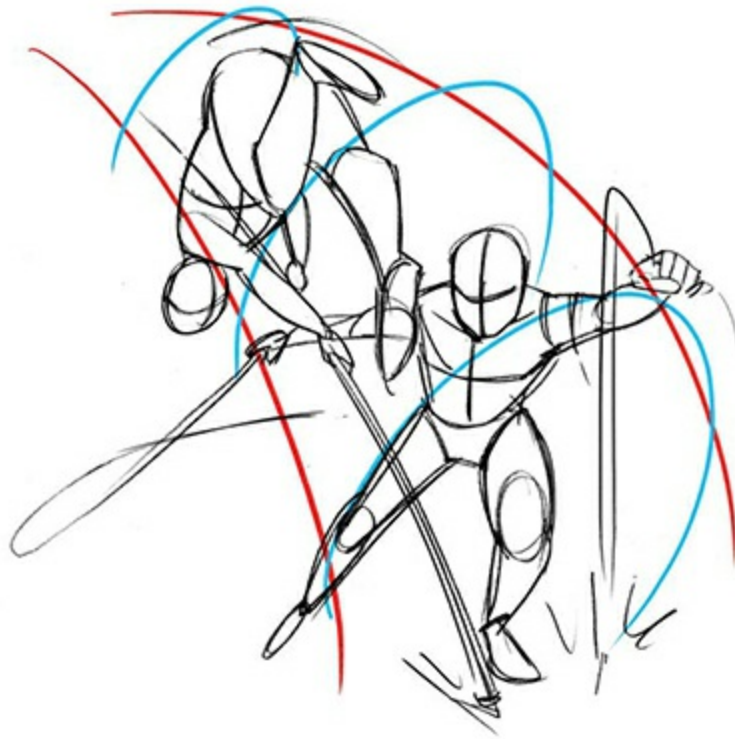
1 *SKETCH SOME POSES*

Think about different ways to frame the scene. In this case, let's go ahead and frame it at a wider angle to showcase some cool fight moves. Sketch out a few poses that you think might look good; go for big, bold and active.



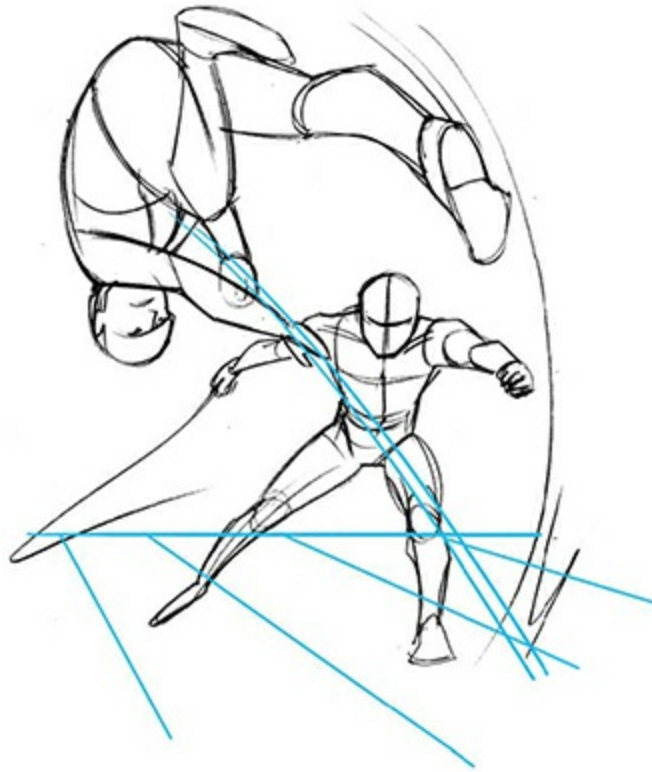
2 *SELECT A POSE*

Pick the pose you like the best from the ones you've sketched. In this one, the Chosen One is pole-vaulting away from a whip attack. Draw it at a wide angle to better visualize what's going on.



3 *PICK AN ANGLE*

Use that sketch as a reference point and spin the pose to another angle to see how it looks. Try putting the whip attack right in the viewer's face, with our protagonist launching herself away.



4 *FILL IT IN*

From the initial sketch of your preferred camera angle, start adjusting the pose and anatomy. Move the Man in Black back a bit more. Instead of having the Chosen One leaping over him, alter the pose a little so she flips sideways away from the attack.



5 DRESS YOUR CHARACTERS

Start adding the clothes and details. The villain has his mask on, and his robes are swishing as he lunges forward. Our hero's braids are flailing about as she flips over. Add a slight curve to the staff as she digs it into the ground and pushes her weight on it, and show movement by adding speed lines.



6 *CLEAN IT UP*

Clean up your pencil lines and get ready to ink. When you do complicated poses, sketch and revise as much as you need to before you start inking. You'll save yourself a lot of time later by making sure everything is the way you want it now.



7 *INK IT*

Lay in your inks. Now is also a good time to refine the speed lines to emphasize movement and highlight the impact of the whip. Since it's such a forceful attack, work in some bits of debris that are launched when the whip connects with the ground.



8 *COLOR IT*

For the duelists, all you need are the individual colors of each character. On top of that, add in a final lighting color to unify the picture. Color in everything according to your palette, then determine the direction the lighting will come from. In this case, the light source is above them, so work in the shadowed areas below.



9 ***ADD FINISHING TOUCHES***

Add more detail to the colors and create another layer of shadows to connect everything in the scene together. Since the whips glow, make sure you draw in the light and color that emit from them. Also, blur the Chosen One and her boot a bit to imitate the effect of fast objects in photographs.

Space Western

Space truly is the last frontier; it's the one great unknown left to humanity. Like the frontier stories told in generations past about the settlers that braved inhospitable new terrain, the space western tells of a whole new kind of cowboy. The heroes in these tales tend to be anti-heroes, the stakes are a lot smaller, and though the setting is an alien planet, it looks more like the streets of a dusty town at high noon than the polished halls of a sophisticated space craft.

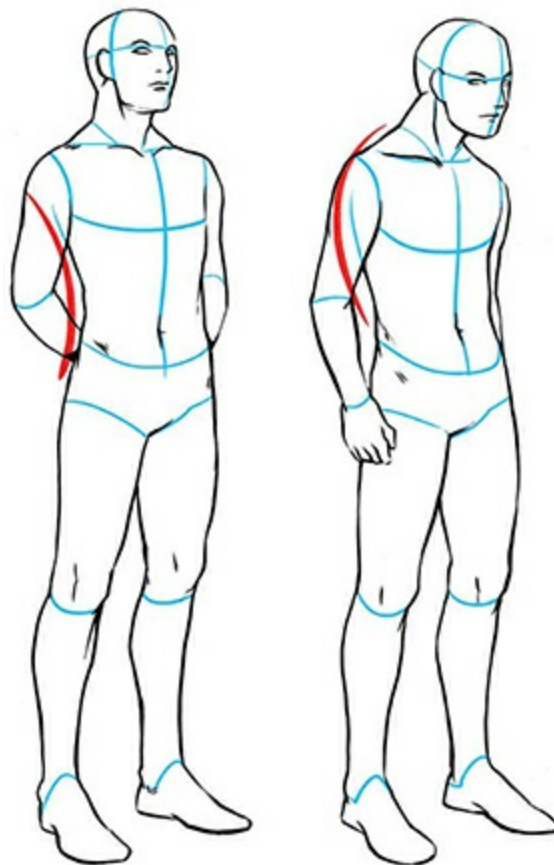


SPACE WESTERN PALETTE

Choose a palette with a lot of neutral tones for your space western. You're looking for colors that are a bit dirty and not very regal. ...

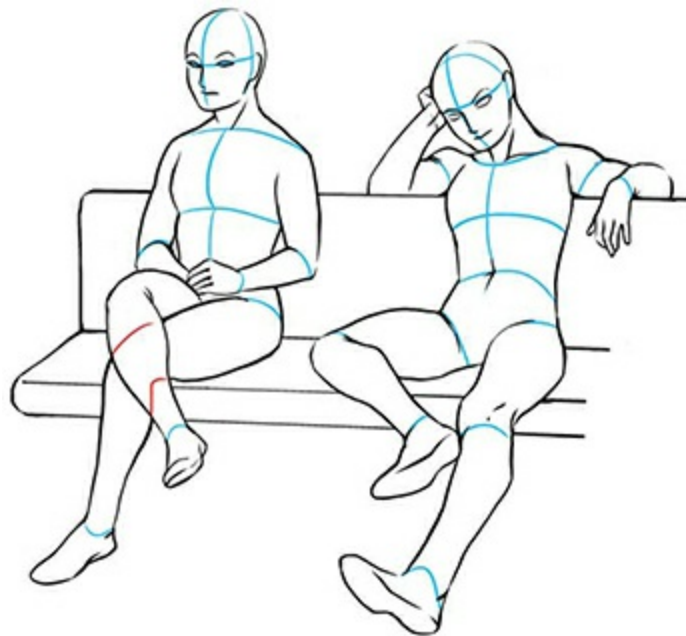
Posture

The types of characters you see in a space western don't overlap much with the sort you'd expect in the clean, cold environment inhabited by a starship crew. There are a lot of different ways to get across those differences, but one of the easiest (and most effective) is to adjust your character's posture.



PERSONALITY DIFFERENCE

These two men have exactly the same height and build, but the way they're standing sets them apart even before you add clothes. The man on the left has a rigid posture, with a straight back and his chin up. The man on the right is slouching; his spine is curved, and he's relaxed. Take a good look at both of them, and think about what assumptions you might make based on their posture alone.



REACTIONS TO A SITUATION

Posture can help show a character's personality, but it can also show the way the same character reacts in different situations. Try drawing a bored character who's seated and waiting for a friend. Now try drawing the same character, still seated, but waiting to be called in for a job interview. What changes did you make?

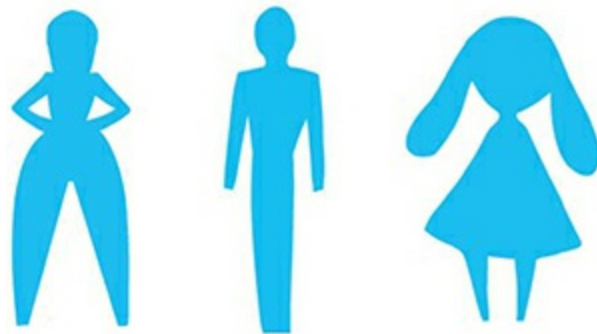


EVERYDAY ACTIONS

You can use posture to imbue personality into everything your character does. Walking, running, fighting, eating, reading a book—every act your character performs will have physical tells that can show the viewer something about them. Sketch a character running, then sketch the same character running a different way. What does the pose say about the character in each case? Which is closer to the idea you want your viewers to take away?

Designing Your Crew

Start designing the crew for your space western. They won't be as groomed and polished as the starship crew; in fact, chances are they won't have any sort of uniform at all. Feel free to create mismatched outfits and disparate characters; part of the fun of this particular subgenre is watching the way very different personalities come together to work as a group.



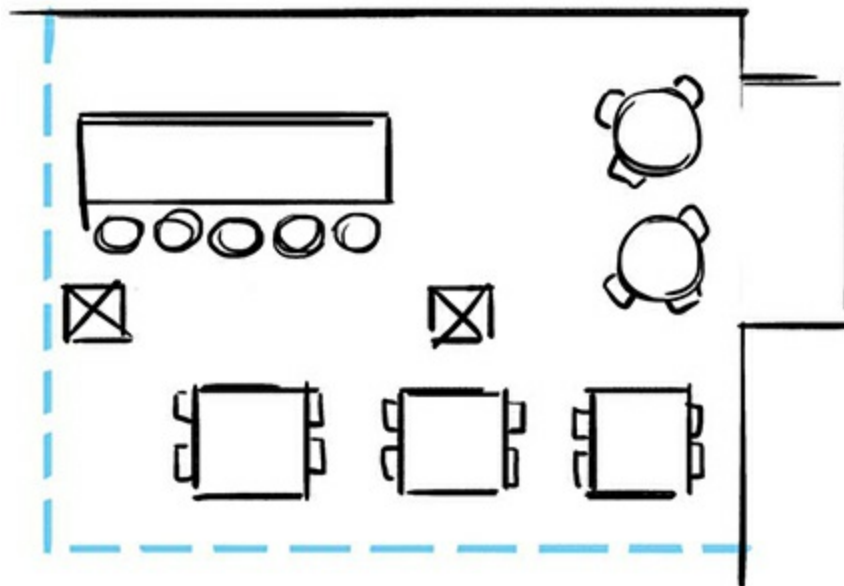
START WITH SILHOUETTES

To make sure your crew look dissimilar from one another and to create some visual interest, start designing them as just silhouettes. Make sure they have different forms and sizes; it will help your visual storytelling if the characters are clearly ...

DEMONSTRATION

THE SMUGGLER CREW

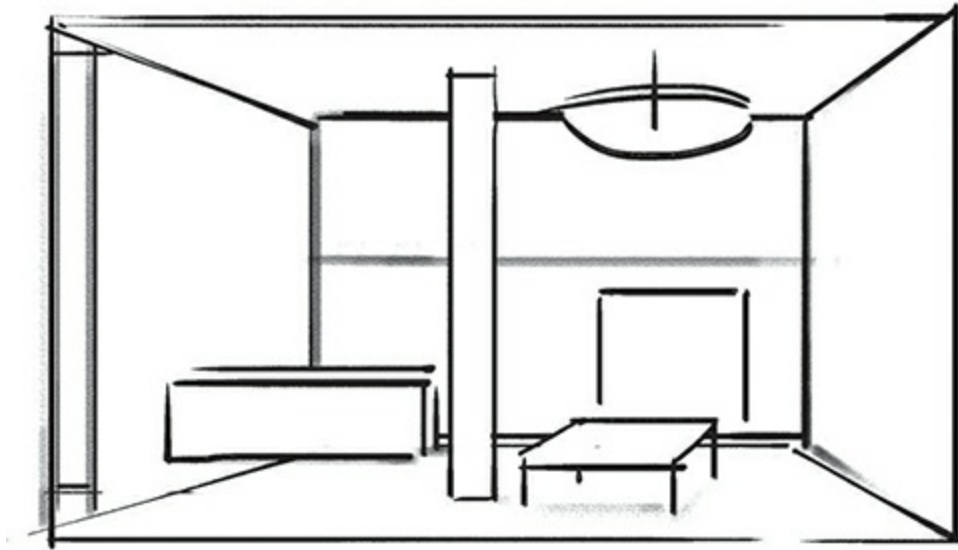
Their ship may be small, and their paydays may be few and far between, but the Smuggler Crew is scrappy, resourceful and darn good at what they do. They act more like a family than coworkers, with plenty of easy banter and good-natured ribbing, and if any one of them is in trouble, you can bet the others will be there to bail them out. They know how to work hard and how to party hard in their downtime.



1 *SKETCH THE SPACE*

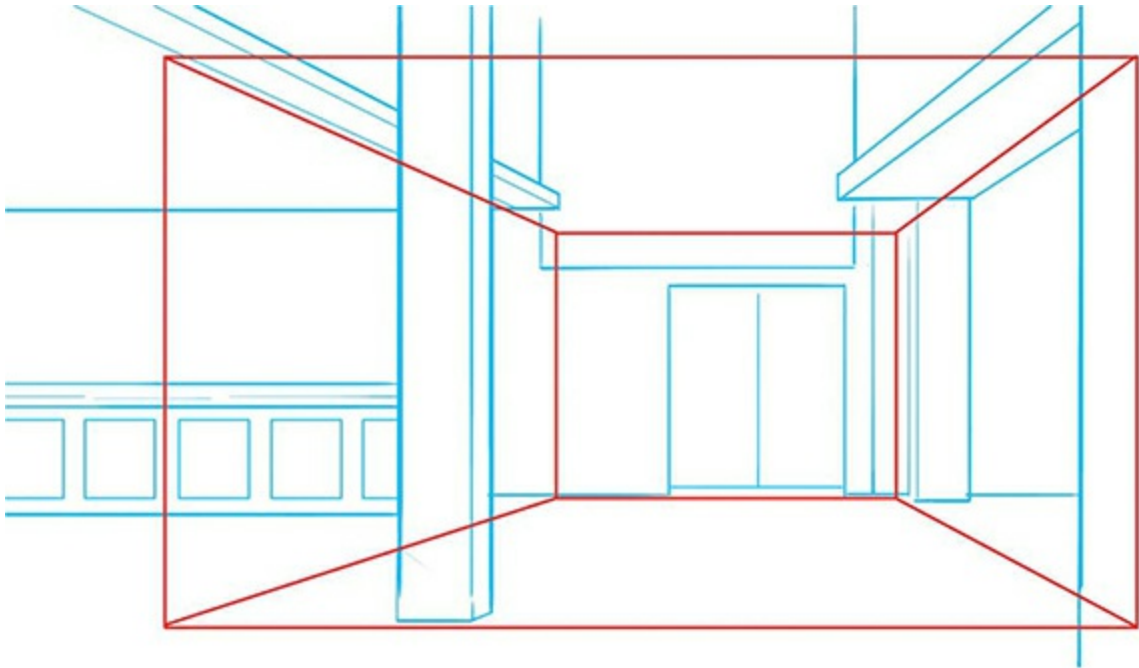
Start with a simple room layout. Include a few tables, chairs and the bar. Draw "X" squares where you'll place columns. The room may actually be bigger, but you only

have to plan out the section you'll use for the picture. Go ahead and indicate the rest of the area with a broken line.



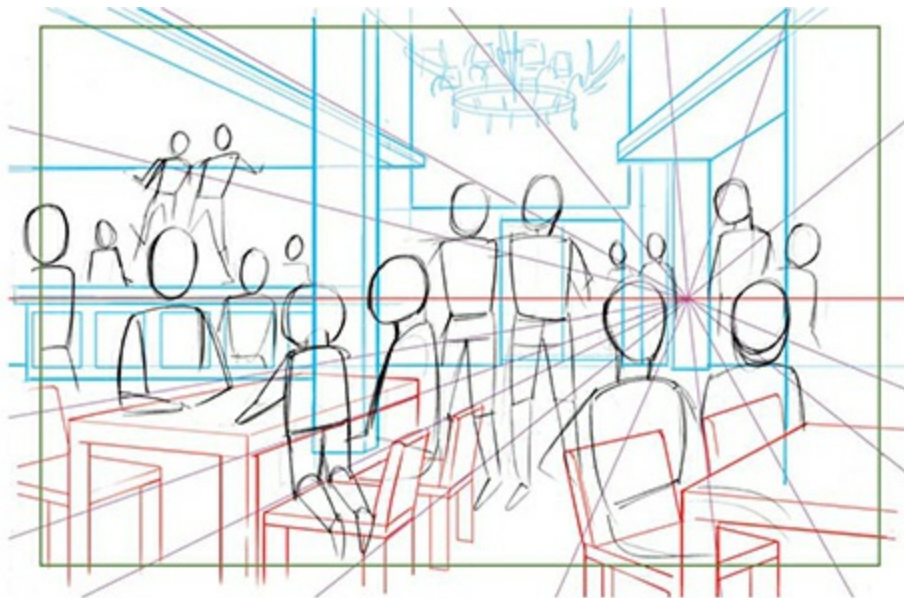
2 *PICK AN ANGLE*

Get a sense of the space in 3-D and start placing the large pieces of furniture in the room. Set the bar in the back, tables in the front, chandelier on the ceiling and columns where you drew your "X" squares on the layout.



3 *TRY SOME PERSPECTIVE*

Use a simple, single vanishing point perspective. The room is almost a box, which makes it very straightforward, but when you're finished, it will be full of people, and you can liven it up with the characters.



4 FLESH OUT THE SETTING

Make sure your perspective is properly in place, then add some points of interest to the tables, chairs and chandelier. Work in some larger pieces of wall decor or light sconces, and start sketching where the people will go. Keep it rough for now and just use circles and a few lines to suggest a person's form. At this point, you're just making sure they're all scaled properly in the setting.



5 ADD DETAIL

Now you're ready to start putting details like expressions and movement into your characters. Try to create little vignettes involving smaller groups of people, so as you look around the drawing, you catch different things happening and notice the interactions.



6 *CLEAN UP AND REVISE*

This step includes the last of the work you'll need to finish before you ink your piece. Make adjustments to the costumes and poses, and add more detail to everything from the characters to the room decor. Now that you've dialed in the framework of the scene, it's time to refine it.



7 *INK IT*

When your art is cleaned up, ink it for that final polished look.



8 ***ADD COLOR***

Choose the sort of colors you might find in a western saloon. You'll want to reinforce the genre here, so go for brown, camel, burgundy and gray. Color the setting in the saloon colors you chose. Your characters might branch out from these colors a little based on their personal palettes and the outfits you selected for them, and that's OK.



9 ***ADD LIGHTING AND BLEND THE STYLES***

When you're finished coloring, add a futuristic vibe with the lighting. Think of the purples and blues of a modern club and really aim to give it a brighter, more modern

feel. Go ahead and work in some hologram screens to show the level of technology.

When you're done, blend the two styles together until the picture is a cohesive whole. You should be left with a combination of looks: traditional Old West set off by the unexpected lighting and technology to show that you're looking at a space western.

About the Authors

Irene Flores is an illustrator, karaoke aficionado and serial coffee drinker. Growing up in the Philippines, Irene was heavily influenced by both Japanese animation and American comics. She and her family relocated to the United States in 1994. Irene currently works and resides in San Luis Obispo, California.

Her previous books include *Shojo Fashion Manga Art School*, its sequel *Shojo Fashion Manga Art School: Year 2*, and *Shojo Fashion Manga Art School: Boys*. She has also worked on projects and anthologies for Boom! Studios, Chromatic Press, Wildstorm, Marvel, Yen Press and Tokyopop. Visit beanclamchowder.com to see more of Irene's work.

Ashly Raiti is a lover of the written word in all its forms. She adores putting ideas down ...

Acknowledgments

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